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YOU WILL LIKE THIS—READ IT!

PRESUMABLY we read a preface before we read the book if it accompanies, if we read a preface at all. Contrarily the time to write a preface is after reading the book. Yet some read prefaces last, and I'll write one first—before the reading.

I sat down with the proofs of this anthology, prepared to read and then preface. I scanned the Table of Contents, the revealing pages of any anthology. I intended to dip in and sample, browsing here and there among the tales of many nations and divers times. I saw listed so many things to catch the fancy that merely to brood over them was an amusing enjoyment. Then and there I had an impulse to write a preface.

I saw listed a story with the title redolent of the Orient, author Georges Clemenceau. That made me recall how I had seen the Tiger of France at the Versailles Peace Conference, fierce player of world politics—but then in France a politician is likely to be a litterateur.

I saw the titles of tales by Heinrich Heine and E. T. A. Hoffman. Heine, with mockery twisting a sentimental smile—I have never read enough of him. Hoffman, historic master and innovator in the telling of romantic tales—but how many of us now-a-days have read a single Hoffman story.

I saw listed—"To His Wife After the Separation" by George Noel Gordon, Lord Byron. What had Byron, the badly behaving, badly rhyming genius to say to his wife after the separation? Another author—that romantic novelist so renowned in his time, known to statecraft as Benjamin Disraeli, Lord Beaconsfield. What account had Ben Johnson written about Shakespeare? That also was catalogued in the Table of Contents. Ben and Will, reminiscence of tavern and theatre.

Should you like to read a tale by Machiavelli? It was there, the world master of cynical statecraft spinning a love story. What did Cicero write to Caesar while the future master of the world was campaigning in Gaul? That was one of the stories. And Benjamin Franklin talking to his big toe—title, "A Dialogue with the Gout."

Full and copious the list, from Boccacio to De Maupassant, from Aesop to Dostoevski, with those curios to add a tang of the odd to the writings of the great.

At the end of the Table of Contents, arranged according to nations, the last item held the eye: Ancient Egypt, Setna and the Magic Book—Anonymous. Anonymous indeed. Some dim tale of Thoth or Amen-Ra told when the Paraohs were lords of the Nile.

Musing over the listed titles of an anthology, an old familiar pleasure. I indulged in it rather excessively this time, fancy caught by singular beguiling bits. Now, having written this, I will read them.

P. S.—Having read them, I now am going to start at the beginning and do it all over again. I would like to keep this book at my side for the rest of my days—and nights.

YOUR PUBLISHER SPEAKS

THE magnetism that is Thomas' comes from a strong and yet simple personality, developed through a vigorously active life—drama enacted upon stages and scenes as constantly varied as boyhood days in a Colorado gold mining camp, cow punching in the same state, reporter and managing editor of a newspaper, law student at Princeton, camera man on the Western Front and, lately, news commentator over a national chain having addressed more people on matters of a semi-serious nature than any man that ever lived. His talks are not only heard throughout the United States and Canada, but are listened to in South America, Central America, at sea, and in the far North, by a total of 20,000,000 people.

Here is a man who prefers his breakfast in riding boots, hunts rattlesnakes, loves horses and, above all, adventure, who runs a local baseball team, and still has no ax to grind.

As a writer of adventure books, he is perhaps best known as historian of the World War, author of "With Lawrence in Arabia", "Raiders of the Deep", "Count Luckner, the Sea Devil", "The Wreck of the Dumaru", "Woodfill of the Regulators", "European Skyways", and "Lauterbach of the China Sea".

As a traveler, he is best known for his books, "India, Land of the Black Pagoda", "Beyond Khyber Pass", and "The First World Flight".

The stuffy, stodgy term, "classic", so appalling from the days of our English courses, will take on a new meaning—a zest and a vitality hitherto lacking—to the reader of this selection.

Here are the choices made to suit the simple, unspoiled, home loving, sport loving man—for him who has faced difficulties and come up smiling, for the man of the masses, as also for him who "walks with kings", for the adventurer, and for the fool, this group will have some laughs, many surprises, a few shocks, and not a few curses. We believe in stories that give a kick—a reaction indefinable and yet conspicuous if absent. Each one of these has its own peculiar jolt, and most of these will come in the form of that elusive "kick".

For students of both sexes, and for English departments of schools, this work is authoritatively recommended and cordially presented.

NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE

1804-1860

Born in Salem, Massachusetts, the scene of the witch trials. Led an unhappy and discouraging life for many years. His literary efforts passed unnoticed, despite the purity of their style. In 1850, he was dismissed from the Salem custom house and then began to write "The Scarlet Letter," which made his fame. Others of his works are "The Marble Faun," "The House of the Seven Gables," and "The Blithedale Romance." Hawthorne is without question the greatest of American writers of fiction.

THE GREAT STONE FACE

ONE afternoon, when the sun was going down, a mother and her little boy sat at the door of their cottage, talking about the Great Stone Face. They had but to lift their eyes, and there it was plainly to be seen, though miles away, with the sunshine brightening all its features.

And what was the Great Stone Face?

Embosomed amongst a family of lofty mountains, there was a valley so spacious that it contained many thousand inhabitants. Some of these good people dwelt in log-huts, with the black forest all around them, on the steep and difficult hillsides. Others had their homes in comfortable farm-houses, and cultivated the rich soil on the gentle slopes or level surfaces of the valley. Others, again, were congregated into populous villages, where some wild, highland rivulet, tumbling down from its birthplace in the upper mountain region, had been caught and tamed by human cunning, and compelled to turn the machinery of cotton factories. The inhabitants of this valley, in short, were numerous, and of many modes of life. But all of them, grown people and children, had a kind of familiarity with the Great Stone Face, although some possessed the gift of distinguishing this grand natural phenomenon more perfectly than many of their neighbors.

The Great Stone Face, then, was a work of Nature in her mood of majestic playfulness, formed on the perpendicular side of a mountain by some immense rocks, which had been thrown together in such a position as, when viewed at a proper distance, precisely to resemble the features of the human countenance. It

seemed as if an enormous giant, or a Titan, had sculptured his own likeness on the precipice. There was the broad arch of the forehead, a hundred feet in height; the nose, with its long bridge; and the vast lips, which, if they could have spoken, would have rolled their thunder accents from one end of the valley to the other. True it is, that if the spectator approached too near, he lost the outline of the gigantic visage, and could discern only a heap of ponderous and gigantic rocks, piled in chaotic ruin one upon another. Retracing his steps, however, the wondrous features would again be seen; and the farther he withdrew from them, the more like a human face, with all its original divinity intact, did they appear; until, as it grew dim in the distance, with the clouds and glorified vapor of the mountains clustering about it, the Great Stone Face seemed positively to be alive.

It was a happy lot for children to grow up to manhood or womanhood with the Great Stone Face before their eyes, for all the features were noble, and the expression was at once grand and sweet, as if it were the glow of a vast, warm heart, that embraced all mankind in its affections, and had room for more. It was an education only to look at it. According to the belief of many people, the valley owed much of its fertility to this benign aspect that was continually beaming over it, illuminating the clouds, and infusing its tenderness into the sunshine.

As we began with saying, a mother and her little boy sat at their cottage-door, gazing at the Great Stone Face, and talking about it. The child's name was Ernest.

"Mother," said he, while the Titanic visage smiled on him, "I wish that it could speak, for it looks so very kindly that its voice must needs be pleasant. If I were to see a man with such a face, I should love him dearly."

"If an old prophecy should come to pass," answered his mother, "we may see a man, some time or other, with exactly such a face as that."

"What prophecy do you mean, dear mother?" eagerly inquired Ernest. "Pray tell me all about it!"

So his mother told him a story that her own mother had told to her, when she herself was younger than little Ernest; a story, not of things that were past, but of what was yet to come; a story, nevertheless, so very old, that even the Indians, who formerly inhabited this valley, had heard it from their forefathers, to whom,

as they affirmed, it had been murmured by the mountain streams, and whispered by the wind among the tree-tops. The purport was, that, at some future day, a child should be born hereabouts, who was destined to become the greatest and noblest personage of his time, and whose countenance, in manhood, should bear an exact resemblance to the Great Stone Face. Not a few old-fashioned people, and young ones likewise, in the ardor of their hopes, still cherished an enduring faith in this old prophecy. But others, who had seen more of the world, had watched and waited till they were weary, and had beheld no man with such a face, nor any man that proved to be much greater or nobler than his neighbors, concluded it to be nothing but an idle tale. At all events, the great man of the prophecy had not yet appeared.

"O mother, dear mother!" cried Ernest, clapping his hands above his head, "I do hope that I shall live to see him!"

His mother was an affectionate and thoughtful woman, and felt that it was wisest not to discourage the generous hopes of her little boy. So she only said to him, "Perhaps you may."

And Ernest never forgot the story that his mother told him. It was always in his mind, whenever he looked upon the Great Stone Face. He spent his childhood in the log-cottage where he was born, and was dutiful to his mother, and helpful to her in many things, assisting her much with his little hands, and more with his loving heart. In this manner, from a happy yet often pensive child, he grew up to be a mild, quiet, unobtrusive boy, and sun-browned with labor in the fields, but with more intelligence brightening his aspect than is seen in many lads who have been taught at famous schools. Yet Ernest had had no teacher, save only that the Great Stone Face became one to him. When the toil of the day was over, he would gaze at it for hours, until he began to imagine that those vast features recognized him, and gave him a smile of kindness and encouragement, responsive to his own look of veneration. We must not take upon us to affirm that this was a mistake, although the Face may have looked no more kindly at Ernest than at all the world besides. But the secret was, that the boy's tender and confiding simplicity discerned what other people could not see; and thus the love, which was meant for all, became his peculiar portion.

About this time, there went a rumor throughout the valley, that the great man, foretold from ages long ago, who was to bear a

resemblance to the Great Stone Face, had appeared at last. It seems that, many years before, a young man had migrated from the valley and settled at a distant seaport, where, after getting together a little money, he had set up as a shopkeeper. His name—but I could never learn whether it was his real one, or a nickname that had grown out of his habits and success in life—was Gathergold. Being shrewd and active, and endowed by Providence with that inscrutable faculty which develops itself in what the world calls luck, he became an exceedingly rich merchant, and owner of a whole fleet of bulky-bottomed ships. All the countries of the globe appeared to join hands for the mere purpose of adding heap after heap to the mountainous accumulation of this one man's wealth. The cold regions of the north, almost within the gloom and shadow of the Arctic Circle, sent him their tribute in the shape of furs; hot Africa sifted for him the golden sands of her rivers, and gathered up the ivory tusks of her great elephants out of the forests; the East came bringing him rich shawls, and spices and teas, and the effulgence of diamonds, and the gleaming purity of large pearls; the ocean, not to be behindhand with the earth, yielding up her mighty whales, that Mr. Gathergold might sell their oil, and make a profit on it. Be the original commodity what it might, it was gold within his grasp. It might be said of him, as of Midas in the fable, that whatever he touched with his finger immediately glistened, and grew yellow, and was changed at once into sterling metal, or, which suited him still better, into piles of coin. And, when Mr. Gathergold had become so very rich that it would have taken him a hundred years only to count his wealth, he bethought himself of his native valley, and resolved to go back thither, and end his days where he was born. With this purpose in view, he sent a skilful architect to build him such a palace as should be fit for a man of his vast wealth to live in.

As I have said above, it had already been rumored in the valley that Mr. Gathergold had turned out to be the prophetic personage so long and vainly looked for, and that his visage was the perfect and undeniable similitude of the Great Stone Face. People were the more ready to believe that this must needs be the fact, when they beheld the splendid edifice that rose, as if by enchantment, on the site of his father's old weather-beaten farm-house. The exterior was of marble, so dazzlingly white that it seemed as though the whole structure might melt away in the sunshine, like

those humbler ones which Mr. Gathergold, in his young play-days, before his fingers were gifted with the touch of transmutation, had been accustomed to build of snow. It had a richly ornamented portico, supported by tall pillars, beneath which was a lofty door, studded with silver knobs, and made of a kind of variegated wood that had been brought from beyond the sea. The windows, from the floor to the ceiling of each stately apartment, were composed, respectively, of but one enormous pane of glass, so transparently pure that it was said to be a finer medium than even the vacant atmosphere. Hardly anybody had been permitted to see the interior of this palace; but it was reported, and with good semblance of truth, to be far more gorgeous than the outside, insomuch that whatever was iron or brass in other houses was silver or gold in this; and Mr. Gathergold's bedchamber, especially, made such a glittering appearance that no ordinary man would have been able to close his eyes there. But, on the other hand, Mr. Gathergold was now so inured to wealth, that perhaps he could not have closed his eyes unless where the gleam of it was certain to find its way beneath his eyelids.

In due time, the mansion was finished; next came the upholsterers, with magnificent furniture; then, a whole troop of black and white servants, the harbingers of Mr. Gathergold, who, in his own majestic person, was expected to arrive at sunset. Our friend Ernest, meanwhile, had been deeply stirred by the idea that the great man, the noble man, the man of prophecy, after so many ages of delay, was at length to be made manifest to his native valley. He knew, boy as he was, that there were a thousand ways in which Mr. Gathergold, with his vast wealth, might transform himself into an angel of beneficence, and assume a control over human affairs as wide and benignant as the smile of the Great Stone Face. Full of faith and hope, Ernest doubted not that what the people said was true, and that now he was to behold the living likeness of those wondrous features on the mountain-side. While the boy was still gazing up the valley, and fancying, as he always did, that the Great Stone Face returned his gaze and looked kindly at him, the rumbling of wheels was heard, approaching swiftly along the winding road.

"Here he comes!" cried a group of people who were assembled to witness the arrival. "Here comes the great Mr. Gathergold!"

A carriage, drawn by four horses, dashed around the turn of

the road. Within it, thrust partly out of the window, appeared the physiognomy of a little old man, with a skin as yellow as if his own Midas-hand had transmuted it. He had a low forehead, small, sharp eyes, puckered about with innumerable wrinkles, and very thin lips, which he made still thinner by pressing them forcibly together.

"The very image of the Great Stone Face!" shouted the people. "Sure enough, the old prophecy is true; and here we have the great man come, at last!"

And, what greatly perplexed Ernest, they seemed actually to believe that here was the likeness which they spoke of. By the roadside there chanced to be an old beggar-woman and two little beggar-children, stragglers from some far-off region, who, as the carriage rolled onward, held out their hands and lifted up their doleful voices, most piteously beseeching charity. A yellow claw—the very same that had clawed together so much wealth—poked itself out of the coach-window, and dropped some copper coins upon the ground; so that, though the great man's name seems to have been Gathergold, he might just as suitably have been nicknamed Scattercopper. Still, nevertheless, with an earnest shout, and evidently with as much good faith as ever, the people belied,—

"He is the very image of the Great Stone Face!"

But Ernest turned sadly from the wrinkled shrewdness of that sordid visage, and gazed up the valley, where, amid a gathering mist, gilded by the last sunbeams, he could still distinguish those glorious features which had impressed themselves into his soul. Their aspect cheered him. What did the benign lips seem to say?

"He will come! Fear not, Ernest; the man will come!"

The years went on, and Ernest ceased to be a boy. He had grown to be a young man now. He attracted little notice from the other inhabitants of the valley; for they saw nothing remarkable in his way of life, save that, when the labor of the day was over, he still loved to go apart and gaze and meditate upon the Great Stone Face. According to their idea of the matter, it was a folly, indeed, but pardonable, inasmuch as Ernest was industrious, kind, and neighborly, and neglected no duty for the sake of indulging this idle habit. They knew not that the Great Stone Face had become a teacher to him, and that the sentiment which was expressed in it would enlarge the young man's heart, and fill it with

wider and deeper sympathies than other hearts. They knew not that thence would come a better wisdom than could be learned from books, and a better life than could be moulded on the defaced example of other human lives. Neither did Ernest know that the thoughts and affections which came to him so naturally, in the fields and at the fireside, and wherever he communed with himself, were of a higher tone than those which all men shared with him. A simple soul,—simple as when his mother first taught him the old prophecy,—he beheld the marvellous features beaming adown the valley, and still wondered that their human counterpart was so long in making his appearance.

By this time poor Mr. Gathergold was dead and buried; and the oddest part of the matter was, that his wealth, which was the body and spirit of his existence, had disappeared before his death, leaving nothing of him but a living skeleton, covered over with a wrinkled, yellow skin. Since the melting away of his gold, it had been very generally conceded that there was no striking resemblance, after all, betwixt the ignoble features of the ruined merchant and that majestic face upon the mountain-side. So the people ceased to honor him during his lifetime, and quietly consigned him to forgetfulness after his decease. Once in a while, it is true, his memory was brought up in connection with the magnificent palace which he had built, and which had long ago been turned into a hotel for the accomodation of strangers, multitudes of whom came, every summer, to visit that famous natural curiosity, the Great Stone Face. Thus, Mr. Gathergold being discredited and thrown into the shade, the man of prophecy was yet to come.

It so happened that a native-born son of the valley, many years before, had enlisted as a soldier, and, after a great deal of hard fighting, had now become an illustrious commander. Whatever he may be called in history, he was known in camps and on the battlefield under the nickname of Old Blood-and-Thunder. This war-worn veteran, being now infirm with age and wounds, and weary of the turmoil of a military life, and of the roll of the drum and the clangor of the trumpet, that had so long been ringing in his ears, had lately signified a purpose of returning to his native valley, hoping to find repose where he remembered to have left it. The inhabitants, his old neighbors and their grown-up children, were resolved to welcome the renowned warrior with a salute of cannon and a public dinner; and all the more enthusiastically, it

being affirmed that now, at last, the likeness of the Great Stone Face had actually appeared. An aid-de-camp of Old Blood-and-Thunder, travelling through the valley, was said to have been struck with the resemblance. Moreover the schoolmates and early acquaintances of the general were ready to testify, on oath, that, to the best of their recollection, the aforesaid general had been exceedingly like the majestic image, even when a boy, only that the idea had never occurred to them at that period. Great, therefore, was the excitement throughout the valley; and many people, who had never once thought of glancing at the Great Stone Face for years before, now spent their time in gazing at it, for the sake of knowing exactly how General Blood-and-Thunder looked.

On the day of the great festival, Ernest, with all the other people of the valley, left his work, and proceeded to the spot where the sylvan banquet was prepared. As he approached, the loud voice of the Rev. Dr. Battleblast was heard, beseeching a blessing on the good things set before them, and on the distinguished friend of peace in whose honor they were assembled. The tables were arranged in a cleared space of the woods, shut in by the surrounding trees, except where a vista opened eastward, and afforded a distant view of the Great Stone Face. Over the general's chair, which was a relic from the home of Washington, there was an arch of verdant boughs, with the laurel profusely intermixed, and surmounted by his country's banner, beneath which he had won his victories. Our friend Ernest raised himself on his tiptoes, in hopes to get a glimpse of the celebrated guest; but there was a mighty crowd about the tables anxious to hear the toasts and speeches, and to catch any word that might fall from the general in reply; and a volunteer company, doing duty as a guard, pricked ruthlessly with their bayonets at any particularly quiet person among the throng. So Ernest, being of an unobtrusive character, was thrust quite into the background, where he could see no more of Old Blood-and-Thunder's physiognomy than if it had been still blazing on the battle-field. To console himself, he turned towards the Great Stone Face, which, like a faithful and long-remembered friend, looked back and smiled upon him through the vista of the forest. Meantime, however, he could overhear the remarks of various individuals, who were comparing the features of the hero with the face on the distant mountain-side.

"Tis the same face, to a hair!" cried one man, cutting a caper for joy.

"Wonderfully like, that's a fact!" responded another.

"Like! why, I call it Old Blood-and-Thunder himself, in a monstrous looking-glass!" cried a third. "And why not? He's the greatest man of this or any other age, beyond a doubt."

And then all three of the speakers gave a great shout, which communicated electricity to the crowd, and called forth a roar from a thousand voices, that went reverberating for miles among the mountains, until you might have supposed that the Great Stone Face had poured its thunder-breath into the cry. All these comments, and this vast enthusiasm, served the more to interest our friend; nor did he think of questioning that now, at length, the mountain-visage had found its human counterpart. It is true, Ernest had imagined that this long-looked-for personage would appear in the character of a man of peace, uttering wisdom, and doing good, and making people happy. But, taking an habitual breadth of view, with all his simplicity, he contended that Providence should choose its own method of blessing mankind, and could conceive that this great end might be effected even by a warrior and a bloody sword, should inscrutable wisdom see fit to order matters so.

"The general! the general!" was now the cry. "Hush! silence! Old Blood-and-Thunder's going to make a speech."

Even so; for, the cloth being removed, the general's health had been drunk amid shouts of applause, and he now stood upon his feet to thank the company. Ernest saw him. There he was, over the shoulders of the crowd, from the two glittering epaulets and embroidered collar upward, beneath the arch of green boughs with intertwined laurel, and the banner drooping as if to shade his brow! And there, too, visible in the same glance, through the vista of the forest, appeared the Great Stone Face! And was there, indeed, such a resemblance as the crowd had testified? Alas, Ernest could not recognize it! He beheld a war-worn and weather-beaten countenance, full of energy, and expressive of an iron will; but the gentle wisdom, the deep, broad, tender sympathies, were altogether wanting in Old Blood-and-Thunder's visage; and even if the Great Stone Face had assumed his look of stern command, the milder traits would still have tempered it.

"This is not the man of prophecy," sighed Ernest, to himself,

as he made his way out of the throng. "And must the world wait longer yet?"

The mists had congregated about the distant mountain-side, and there were seen the grand and awful features of the Great Stone Face, awful but benignant, as if a mighty angel were sitting among the hills, and enrobing himself in a cloud-vesture of gold and purple. As he looked, Ernest could hardly believe but that a smile beamed over the whole visage, with a radiance still brightening, although without motion of the lips. It was probably the effect of the western sunshine, melting through the thinly diffused vapors that had swept between him and the object that he gazed at. But—as it always did—the aspect of his marvellous friend made Ernest as hopeful as if he had never hoped in vain.

"Fear not, Ernest," said his heart, even as if the Great Face were whispering him,—"fear not, Ernest; he will come."

More years sped swiftly and tranquilly away. Ernest still dwelt in his native valley, and was now a man of middle age. By imperceptible degrees, he had become known among the people. Now, as heretofore, he labored for his bread, and was the same simple-hearted man that he had always been. But he had thought and felt so much, he had given so many of the best hours of his life to unworldly hopes for some great good to mankind, that it seemed as though he had been talking with the angels, and had imbibed a portion of their wisdom unawares. It was visible in the calm and well-considered beneficence of his daily life, the quiet stream of which had made a wide green margin all along its course. Not a day passed by, that the world was not the better because this man, humble as he was, had lived. He never stepped aside from his own path, yet would always reach a blessing to his neighbor. Almost involuntarily, too, he had become a preacher. The pure and high simplicity of his thought, which, as one of its manifestations, took shape in the good deeds that dropped silently from his hand, flowed also forth in speech. He uttered truths that wrought upon and moulded the lives of those who heard him. His auditors, it may be, never suspected that Ernest, their own neighbor and familiar friend, was more than an ordinary man; least of all did Ernest himself suspect it; but inevitably as the murmur of a rivulet, came thoughts out of his mouth that no other human lips had spoken.

When the people's minds had had a little time to cool, they

were ready enough to acknowledge their mistake in imagining a similarity between General Blood-and-Thunder's truculent physiognomy and the benign visage on the mountain-side. But now, again, there were reports and many paragraphs in the newspapers, affirming that the likeness of the Great Stone Face had appeared upon the broad shoulders of a certain eminent statesman. He, like Mr. Gathergold and Old Blood-and-Thunder, was a native of the valley, but had left it in his early days, and taken up the trades of law and politics. Instead of the rich man's wealth and the warrior's sword, he had but a tongue, and it was mightier than both together. So wonderfully eloquent was he, that whatever he might choose to say, his auditors had no choice but to believe him; wrong looked like right, and right like wrong; for when it pleased him, he could make a kind of illuminated fog with his mere breath, and obscure the natural daylight with it. His tongue, indeed, was a magic instrument: sometimes it rumbled like the thunder; sometimes it warbled like the sweetest music. It was the blast of war,—the song of peace; and it seemed to have a heart in it, when there was no such matter. In good truth, he was a wondrous man; and when his tongue had acquired him all other imaginable success,—when it had been heard in halls of state, and in the courts of princes and potentates,—after it had made him known all over the world, even as a voice crying from shore to shore,—it finally persuaded his countrymen to select him for the Presidency. Before this time,—indeed, as soon as he began to grow celebrated,—his admirers had found out the resemblance between him and the Great Stone Face; and so much were they struck by it, that throughout the country this distinguished gentleman was known by the name of Old Stony Phiz. The phrase was considered as giving a highly favorable aspect to his political prospects; for, as is likewise the case with the Papedom, nobody ever becomes President without taking a name other than his own.

While his friends were doing their best to make him President, Old Stony Phiz, as he was called, set out on a visit to the valley where he was born. Of course, he had no other object than to shake hands with his fellow-citizens, and neither thought nor cared about any effect which his progress through the country might have upon the election. Magnificent preparations were made to receive the illustrious statesman; a cavalcade of horsemen

set forth to meet him at the boundary line of the State, and all the people left their business and gathered along the wayside to see him pass. Among these was Ernest. Though more than once disappointed, as we have seen, he had such a hopeful and confiding nature, that he was always ready to believe in whatever seemed beautiful and good. He kept his heart continually open, and thus was sure to catch the blessing from on high, when it should come. So now again, as buoyantly as ever, he went forth to behold the likeness of the Great Stone Face.

The cavalcade came prancing along the road, with a great clattering of hoofs and a mighty cloud of dust, which rose up so dense and high that the visage of the mountain-side was completely hidden from Ernest's eyes. All the great men of the neighborhood were there on horseback: militia officers, in uniform; the member of Congress; the sheriff of the county; the editors of newspapers; and many a farmer, too, had mounted his patient steed, with his Sunday coat upon his back. It really was a very brilliant spectacle, especially as there were numerous banners flaunting over the cavalcade, on some of which were gorgeous portraits of the illustrious statesman and the Great Stone Face, smiling familiarly at one another, like two brothers. If the pictures were to be trusted, the mutual resemblance, it must be confessed, was marvellous. We must not forget to mention that there was a band of music, which made the echoes of the mountains ring and reverberate with the loud triumph of its strains; so that airy and soul-thrilling melodies broke out among all the heights and hollows, as if every nook of his native valley had found a voice, to welcome the distinguished guest. But the grandest effect was when the far-off mountain precipice flung back the music; for then the Great Stone Face itself seemed to be swelling the triumphant chorus, in acknowledgment that, at length, the man of prophecy was come.

All this while the people were throwing up their hats and shouting, with enthusiasm so contagious that the heart of Ernest kindled up, and he likewise threw up his hat, and shouted, as loudly as the loudest, "Huzza for the great man! Huzza for Old Stony Phiz!" but as yet he had not seen him.

"Here he is, now!" cried those who stood near Ernest. "There! There! Look at Old Stony Phiz and then at the Old Man of

the Mountain, and see if they are not as like as two twin-brothers!"

In the midst of all this gallant array, came an open barouche, drawn by four white horses; and in the barouche, with his massive head uncovered, sat the illustrious statesman, Old Stony Phiz himself.

"Confess it," said one of Ernest's neighbors to him, "the Great Stone Face has met its match at last!"

Now, it must be owned that, at his first glimpse of the countenance which was bowing and smiling from the barouche, Ernest did fancy that there was resemblance between it and the old familiar face upon the mountainside. The brow, with its massive depth and loftiness, and all the other features, indeed, were boldly and strongly hewn, as if in emulation of a more than heroic, of a Titanic model. But the sublimity and stateliness, the grand expression of a divine sympathy, that illuminated the mountain visage and etherealized its ponderous granite substance into spirit, might here be sought in vain. Something had been originally left out, or had departed. And therefore the marvellously gifted statesman had always a weary gloom in the deep caverns of his eyes, as of a child that has outgrown its playthings, or a man of mighty faculties and little aims, whose life, with all its high performances, was vague and empty, because no high purpose had endowed it with reality.

Still, Ernest's neighbor was thrusting his elbow into his side, and pressing him for an answer.

"Confess! confess! Is not he the very picture of your Old Man of the Mountain?"

"No!" said Ernest, bluntly, "I see little or no likeness."

"Then so much the worse for the Great Stone Face!" answered his neighbor; and again he set up a shout for Old Stony Phiz.

But Ernest turned away, melancholy, and almost despondent; for this was the saddest of his disappointments, to behold a man who might have fulfilled the prophecy, and had not willed to do so. Meantime, the cavalcade, the banners, the music, and the barouches swept past him, with the vociferous crowd in the rear, leaving the dust to settle down, and the Great Stone Face to be revealed again, with the grandeur that it had worn for untold centuries.

"Lo, here I am, Ernest!" the benign lips seemed to say. "I have waited longer than thou, and am not yet weary. Fear not; the man will come."

The years hurried onward, treading in their haste on one another's heels. And now they began to bring white hairs, and scatter them over the head of Ernest; they made reverend wrinkles across his forehead, and furrows in his cheeks. He was an aged man. But not in vain had he grown old: more than the white hairs on his head were the sage thoughts in his mind; his wrinkles and furrows were inscriptions that Time had graved, and in which he had written legends of wisdom that had been tested by the tenor of a life. And Ernest had ceased to be obscure. Unsought for, undesired, had come the fame which so many seek, and made him known in the great world, beyond the limits of the valley in which he had dwelt so quietly. College professors, and even the active men of cities, came from far to see and converse with Ernest; for the report had gone abroad that this simple husbandman had ideas unlike those of other men, not gained from books, but of a higher tone,—a tranquil and familiar majesty, as if he had been talking with the angels as his daily friends. Whether it were sage, statesman or philanthropist, Ernest received these visitors with the gentle sincerity that had characterized him from boyhood, and spoke freely with them of whatever came uppermost, or lay deepest in his heart or their own. While they talked together, his face would kindle, unawares, and shine upon them, as with a mild evening light. Pensive with the fulness of such discourse, his guests took leave and went their way; and passing up the valley, paused to look at the Great Stone Face, imagining that they had seen its likeness in a human countenance, but could not remember where.

While Ernest had been growing up and growing old, a bountiful Providence had granted a new poet to this earth. He, likewise, was a native of the valley, but had spent the greater part of his life at a distance from that romantic region, pouring out his sweet music amid the bustle and din of cities. Often, however, did the mountains which had been familiar to him in his childhood lift their snowy peaks into the clear atmosphere of his poetry. Neither was the Great Stone Face forgotten, for the poet had celebrated it in an ode, which was grand enough to have been

uttered by its own majestic lips. This man of genius, we may say, had come down from heaven with wonderful endowments. If he sang of a mountain, the eyes of all mankind beheld a mightier grandeur reposing on its breast, or soaring to its summit, than had before been seen there. If his theme were a lovely lake, a celestial smile had now been thrown over it, to gleam forever on its surface. If it were the vast old sea, even the deep immensity of its dread bosom seemed to swell the higher, as if moved by the emotions of the song. Thus the world assumed another and a better aspect from the hour that the poet blessed it with his happy eyes. The Creator had bestowed him, as the last best touch to his own handiwork. Creation was not finished till the poet came to interpret, and so complete it.

The effect was no less high and beautiful, when his human brethren were the subject of his verse. The man or woman, sordid with the common dust of life, who crossed his daily path, and the little child who played in it, were glorified if he beheld them in his mood of poetic faith. He showed the golden links of the great chain that intertwined them with an angelic kindred; he brought out the hidden traits of a celestial birth that made them worthy of such kin. Some, indeed, there were, who thought to show the soundness of their judgment by affirming that all the beauty and dignity of the natural world existed only in the poet's fancy. Let such men speak for themselves, who undoubtedly appear to have been spawned forth by Nature with a contemptuous bitterness; she having plastered them up out of her refuse stuff, after all the swine were made. As respects all things else, the poet's ideal was the truest truth.

The songs of this poet found their way to Ernest. He read them after his customary toil, seated on the bench before his cottage-door, where for such a length of time he had filled his repose with thought, by gazing at the Great Stone Face. And now as he read stanzas that caused the soul to thrill within him, he lifted his eyes to the vast countenance beaming on him so benignantly.

"O majestic friend," he murmured, addressing the Great Stone Face, "is not this man worthy to resemble thee?"

The Face seemed to smile, but answered not a word.

Now it happened that the poet, though he dwelt so far away,

had not only heard of Ernest, but had meditated much upon his character, until he deemed nothing so desirable as to meet this man, whose untaught wisdom walked hand in hand with the noble simplicity of his life. One summer morning, therefore, he took passage by the railroad, and, in the decline of the afternoon, alighted from the cars at no great distance from Ernest's cottage. The great hotel, which had formerly been the palace of Mr. Gathergold, was close at hand, but the poet, with his carpet-bag on his arm, inquired at once where Ernest dwelt, and was resolved to be accepted as his guest.

Approaching the door, he found there the good old man, holding a volume in his hand, which alternately he read, and then, with a finger between the leaves, looked lovingly at the Great Stone Face.

"Good evening," said the poet. "Can you give a traveller a night's lodging?"

"Willingly," answered Ernest; and then he added, smiling, "Methinks I never saw the Great Stone Face look so hospitably at a stranger."

The poet sat down on the bench beside him, and he and Ernest talked together. Often had the poet held intercourse with the wittiest and the wisest, but never before with a man like Ernest, whose thoughts and feelings gushed up with such a natural freedom, and who made great truths so familiar by his simple utterance of them. Angels, as had been so often said, seemed to have wrought with him at his labor in the fields; angels seemed to have sat with him by the fireside; and, dwelling with angels as friends with friends, he had imbibed the sublimity of their ideas, and imbued it with the sweet and lowly charm of household words. So thought the poet. And Ernest, on the other hand, was moved and agitated by the living images which the poet flung out of his mind, and which peopled all the air about the cottage-door with shapes of beauty, both gay and pensive. The sympathies of these two men instructed them with a profounder sense than either could have attained alone. Their minds accorded into one strain, and made delightful music which neither of them could have claimed as all his own, nor distinguished his own share from the other's. They led one another, as it were, into a high pavilion of their thoughts, so remote, and hitherto so dim, that they had

never entered it before, and so beautiful that they desired to be there always.

As Ernest listened to the poet, he imagined that the Great Stone Face was bending forward to listen too. He gazed earnestly into the poet's glowing eyes.

"Who are you, my strangely gifted guest?" he said.

The poet laid his finger on the volume that Ernest had been reading.

"You have read these poems," said he. "You know me, then,—for I wrote them."

Again, and still more earnestly than before, Ernest examined the poet's features; then turned towards the Great Stone Face; then back, with an uncertain aspect, to his guest. But his countenance fell; he shook his head, and sighed.

"Wherefore are you sad?" inquired the poet.

"Because," replied Ernest, "all through life I have awaited the fulfillment of a prophecy; and, when I read these poems, I hoped that it might be fulfilled in you."

"You hoped," answered the poet, faintly smiling, "to find in me the likeness of the Great Stone Face. And you are disappointed, as formerly with Mr. Gathergold, and Old Blood-and-Thunder, and Old Stony Phiz. Yes, Ernest, it is my doom. You must add my name to the illustrious three, and record another failure of your hopes. For—in shame and sadness do I speak it, Ernest—I am not worthy to be typified by yonder benign and majestic image."

"And why?" asked Ernest. He pointed to the volume. "Are not those thoughts divine?"

"The have a strain of the Divinity," replied the poet. "You can hear in them the far-off echo of a heavenly song. But my life, dear Ernest, has not corresponded with my thought. I have had grand dreams, but they have been only dreams because I have lived—and that, too, by my own choice—among poor and mean realities. Sometimes even—shall I dare to say it?—I lack faith in the grandeur, the beauty, and the goodness, which my own works are said to have made more evident in nature and in human life. Why, then, pure seeker of the good and true, shouldst thou hope to find me, in yonder image of the divine?"

The poet spoke sadly, and his eyes were dim with tears. So,

likewise, were those of Ernest.

At the hour of sunset, as had long been his frequent custom, Ernest was to discourse to an assemblage of the neighboring inhabitants in the open air. He and the poet, arm in arm, still talking together as they went along, proceeded to the spot. It was a small nook among the hills, with a gray precipice behind, the stern front of which was relieved by the pleasant foliage of many creeping plants, that made a tapestry for the naked rock, by hanging their festoons from all its rugged angles. At a small elevation above the ground, set in a rich framework of verdure, there appeared a niche, spacious enough to admit a human figure, with freedom for such gestures as spontaneously accompany earnest thought and genuine emotion. Into this natural pulpit Ernest ascended, and threw a look of familiar kindness around upon his audience. They stood, or sat, or reclined upon the grass, as seemed good to each, with the departing sunshine falling obliquely over them, and mingling its subdued cheerfulness with the solemnity of a grove of ancient trees, beneath and amid the boughs of which the golden rays were constrained to pass. In another direction was seen the Great Stone Face, with the same cheer, combined with the same solemnity, in its benignant aspect.

Ernest began to speak, giving to the people of what was in his heart and mind. His words had power, because they accorded with his thoughts; and his thoughts had reality and depth, because they harmonized with the life which he had always lived. It was not mere breath that this preacher uttered; they were the words of life, because a life of good deeds and holy love was melted into them. Pearls, pure and rich, had been dissolved into this precious draught. The poet, as he listened, felt that the being and character of Ernest were a nobler strain of poetry than he had ever written. His eyes glistening with tears, he gazed reverentially at the venerable man, and said within himself that never was there an aspect so worthy of a prophet and a sage as that mild, sweet, thoughtful countenance, with the glory of white hair diffused about it. At a distance, but distinctly to be seen, high up in the golden light of the setting sun, appeared the Great Stone Face, with hoary mists around it, like the white hairs around the brow of Ernest. Its look of grand beneficence seemed to embrace the world.

At that moment, in sympathy with the thought which he was about to utter, the face of Ernest assumed a grandeur of expression, so imbued with benevolence, that the poet, by an irresistible impulse, threw his arms aloft, and shouted,—

“Behold! Behold! Ernest is himself the likeness of the Great Stone Face!”

Then all the people looked, and saw that what the deep-sighted poet said was true. The prophecy was fulfilled. But Ernest, having finished what he had to say, took the poet’s arm, and walked slowly homeward, still hoping that some wiser and better man than himself would by and by appear, bearing a resemblance to the GREAT STONE FACE.

ETHAN BRAND

A CHAPTER FROM AN ABORTIVE ROMANCE

BARTRAM the lime-burner, a rough, heavy-looking man, begrimed with charcoal, sat watching his kiln at nightfall, while his little son played at building houses with the scattered fragments of marble, when, on the hillside below them, they heard a roar of laughter, not mirthful, but slow and even solemn, like a wind shaking the boughs of the forest.

“Father, what is that?” asked the little boy, leaving his play, and pressing betwixt his father’s knees.

“Oh, some drunken man, I suppose,” answered the lime-burner; “some merry fellow from the bar-room in the village, who dared not laugh loud enough within doors lest he should blow the roof of the house off. So here he is, shaking his jolly sides, at the foot of Greylock.”

“But, father,” said the child, more sensitive than the obtuse middle-aged clown, “he does not laugh like a man that is glad. So the noise frightens me!”

“Don’t be a fool, child!” cried his father, gruffly. “You will never make a man, I do believe; there is too much of your mother in you. I have known the rustling of a leaf startle you. Hark! Here comes the merry fellow now. You shall see that there is no harm in him.”

Bartram and his little son, while they were talking thus, sat watching the same lime-kiln that had been the scene of Ethan Brand’s solitary and meditative life, before he began his search

for the Unpardonable Sin. Many years, as we have seen, had now elapsed since that portentous night when the IDEA was first developed. The kiln, however, on the mountainside stood unimpaired, and was in nothing changed since he had thrown his dark thoughts into the intense glow of its furnace, and melted them, as it were, into the one thought that took possession of his life. It was a rude, round, tower-like structure about twenty feet high, heavily built of rough stones, and with a hillock of earth heaped about the larger part of its circumference, so that the blocks and fragments of marble might be drawn by cart-loads and thrown in at the top. There was an opening at the bottom of the tower like an oven-mouth, but large enough to admit a man in a stooping posture, and provided with a massive iron door. With the smoke and jets of flame issuing from the chinks and crevices of this door, which seemed to give admittance into the hillside, it resembled nothing so much as the private entrance to the infernal regions, which the shepherds of the Delectable Mountains were accustomed to show to pilgrims.

There are many such lime-kilns in that tract of country, for the purpose of burning the white marble which composes a large part of the substance of the hills. Some of them, built years ago, and long deserted, with weeds growing in the vacant round of the interior, which is open to the sky, and grass and wild flowers rooting themselves into the chinks of the stones, look already like relics of antiquity, and may yet be overspread with the lichens of centuries to come. Others, where the lime-burner still feeds his daily and night-long fire, afford points of interest to the wanderer among the hills, who seats himself on a log of wood or a fragment of marble, to hold a chat with the solitary man. It is a lonesome, and, when the character is inclined to thought, may be an intensely thoughtful, occupation; as is proved in the case of Ethan Brand, who had mused to such strange purpose, in days gone by, while the fire in this very kiln was burning.

The man who now watched the fire was of a different order, and troubled himself with no thoughts save the very few that were requisite to his business. At frequent intervals he flung back the clashing weight of the iron door, and, turning his face from the insufferable glare, thrust in huge logs of oak, or stirred the immense brands with a long pole. Within the furnace were seen the curling and riotous flames, and the burning marble,

almost molten with the intensity of heat; while without the reflection of the fire quivered on the dark intricacy of the surrounding forest, and showed in the foreground a bright and ruddy little picture of the hut, the spring beside its door, the athletic and coal-begrimed figure of the lime-burner, and the half-frightened child shrinking into the protection of his father's shadow. And when, again, the iron door was closed, then reappeared the tender light of the half-full moon, which vainly strove to trace out the indistinct shapes of the neighboring mountains; and, in the upper sky, there was a flitting congregation of clouds, still faintly tinged with the rosy sunset, though thus far down into the valley the sunshine had vanished long and long ago.

The little boy now crept still closer to his father, as footsteps were heard ascending the hillside, and a human form thrust aside the bushes that clustered beneath the trees.

"Halloo! who is it?" cried the lime-burner, vexed at his son's timidity, yet half infected by it. "Come forward, and show yourself, like a man, or I'll fling this chunk of marble at your head!"

"You offer me a rough welcome," said a gloomy voice, as the unknown man drew nigh. "Yet I neither claim nor desire a kinder one, even at my own fireside."

To obtain a distincter view, Bartram threw open the iron door of the kiln, whence immediately issued a gush of fierce light, that smote full upon the stranger's face and figure. To a careless eye there appeared nothing very remarkable in his aspect, which was that of a man in a coarse, brown, country-made suit of clothes, tall and thin, with the staff and heavy shoes of a wayfarer. As he advanced he fixed his eyes—which were very bright—intently upon the brightness of the furnace, as if he beheld, or expected to behold, some object worthy of note within it.

"Good evening, stranger," said the lime-burner; "whence come you, so late in the day?"

"I come from my search," answered the wayfarer; "for at last it is finished."

"Drunk—or crazy!" muttered Bartram to himself. "I shall have trouble with the fellow. The sooner I drive him away, the better."

The little boy, all in a tremble, whispered to his father, and begged him to shut the door of the kiln, so that there might not be so much light; for that there was something in the man's face

which he was afraid to look at, yet could not look away from. And, indeed, even the lime-burner's dull and torpid sense began to be impressed by an indescribable something in that thin, rugged, thoughtful visage, with the grizzled hair hanging wildly about it, and those deeply sunken eyes, which gleamed like fires within the entrance of a mysterious cavern. But, as he closed the door, the stranger turned towards him, and spoke in a quiet, familiar way, that made Bartram feel as if he were a sane and sensible man, after all.

"Your task draws to an end, I see," said he. "This marble has already been burning three days. A few hours more will convert the stone to lime."

"Why, who are you?" exclaimed the lime-burner. "You seem as well acquainted with my business as I am myself."

"And well I may be," said the stranger; "for I followed the same craft many a long year, and here, too, on this very spot. But you are a newcomer in these parts. Did you never hear of Ethan Brand?"

"The man that went in search of the Unardonable Sin?" asked Bartram, with a laugh.

"The same," answered the stranger. "He has found what he sought, and therefore he comes back again."

"What! then you are Ethan Brand himself?" cried the lime-burner, in amazement. "I am a newcomer here, as you say, and they call it eighteen years since you left the foot of Greylock. But, I can tell you, the good folks still talk about Ethan Brand, in the village yonder, and what a strange errand took him away from his lime-kiln. Well, and so you have found the Unardonable Sin?"

"Even so," said the stranger, calmly.

"If the question is a fair one," proceeded Bartram, "where might it be?"

Ethan Brand laid his finger on his own heart.

"Here!" replied he.

And then, without mirth in his countenance, but as if moved by an involuntary recognition of the infinite absurdity of seeking throughout the world for what was the closest of all things to himself, and looking into every heart, save his own, for what was hidden in no other breast, he broke into a laugh of scorn. It was the same slow, heavy laugh that had almost appalled the

lime-burner when it heralded the wayfarer's approach.

The solitary mountainside was made dismal by it. Laughter, when out of place, mistimed, or bursting forth from a disordered state of feeling, may be the most terrible modulation of the human voice. The laughter of one asleep, even if it be a little child—the madman's laugh—the wild, screaming laugh of a born idiot—are sounds that we sometimes tremble to hear, and would always willingly forget. Poets have imagined no utterance of fiends or hobgoblins so fearfully appropriate as a laugh. And even the obtuse lime-burner felt his nerves shaken as this strange man looked inward at his own heart, and burst into laughter that rolled away into the night, and was indistinctly reverberated among the hills.

"Joe," said he to his little son, "scamper down to the tavern in the village, and tell the jolly fellows there that Ethan Brand has come back and that he has found the Unardonable Sin!"

The boy darted away on his errand, to which Ethan Brand made no objection, nor seemed hardly to notice it. He sat on a log of wood, looking steadfastly at the iron door of the kiln. When the child was out of sight and his swift and light footsteps ceased to be heard treading first on the fallen leaves and then on the rocky mountain path, the lime-burner began to regret his departure. He felt that the little fellow's presence had been a barrier between his guest and himself, and that he must now deal, heart to heart, with a man who, on his own confession, had committed the one only crime for which Heaven could afford no mercy. That crime, in its indistinct blackness, seemed to overshadow him. The lime-burner's own sins rose up within him, and made his memory riotous with a throng of evil shapes that asserted their kindred with the Master Sin, whatever it might be, which it was within the scope of man's corrupted nature to conceive and cherish. They were all of one family; they went to and fro between his breast and Ethan Brand's, and carried dark greetings from one to the other.

Then Bartram remembered the stories which had grown traditional in reference to this strange man, who had come upon him like a shadow of the night, and was making himself at home in his old place, after so long absence that the dead people, dead and buried for years, would have had more right to be at home, in any familiar spot, than he. Ethan Brand, it was said, had

conversed with Satan himself in the lurid blaze of this very kiln. The legend had been matter of mirth heretofore, but looked grisly now. According to this tale, before Ethan Brand departed on his search, he had been accustomed to evoke a fiend from the hot furnace of the lime-kiln, night after night, in order to confer with him about the Unpardonable Sin; the man and the fiend each laboring to frame the image of some mode of guilt which could neither be atoned for nor forgiven. And, with the first gleam of light upon the mountain-top, the fiend crept in at the iron door, there to abide the intensest element of fire until again summoned forth to share in the dreadful task of extending man's possible guilt beyond the scope of Heaven's else infinite mercy.

While the lime-burner was struggling with the horror of these thoughts, Ethan Brand rose from the log, and flung open the door of the kiln. The action was in such accordance with the idea in Bartram's mind that he almost expected to see the Evil One issue forth, red-hot, from the raging furnace.

"Hold! hold!" cried he, with a tremulous attempt to laugh; for he was ashamed of his fears, although they overmastered him. "Don't, for mercy's sake, bring out your Devil now!"

"Man," sternly replied Ethan Brand, "what need have I of the Devil? I have left him behind me, on my track. It is with such halfway sinners as you that he busies himself. Fear not because I open the door. I do but act by old custom, and am going to trim your fire, like a lime-burner, as I was once."

He stirred the vast coals, thrust in more wood, and bent forward to gaze into the hollow prison-house of the fire, regardless of the fierce glow that reddened upon his face. The lime-burner sat watching him, and half suspected this strange guest of a purpose, if not to evoke a fiend, at least to plunge bodily into the flames, and thus vanish from the sight of man. Ethan Brand, however, drew quietly back, and closed the door of the kiln.

"I have looked," said he, "into many a human heart that was seven times hotter with sinful passions than yonder furnace is with fire. But I found not there what I sought. No, not the Unpardonable Sin!"

"What is the Unpardonable Sin?" asked the lime-burner; and then he shrank farther from his companion, trembling lest his question should be answered.

"It is a sin that grew within my own breast," replied Ethan

Brand, standing erect, with a pride that distinguishes all enthusiasts of his stamp. "A sin that grew nowhere else! The sin of an intellect that triumphed over the sense of brotherhood with man and reverence for God, and sacrificed everything to its own mighty claims! The only sin that deserves a recompense of immortal agony! Freely, were it to do again, would I incur the guilt. Unshrinkingly I accept the retribution!"

"The man's head is turned," muttered the lime-burner to himself. "He may be a sinner like the rest of us—nothing more likely—but, I'll be sworn, he is a madman too."

Nevertheless, he felt uncomfortable at his situation, alone with Ethan Brand on the wild mountain-side, and was right glad to hear the rough murmur of tongues, and the footsteps of what seemed a pretty numerous party, stumbling over the stones and rustling through the underbrush. Soon appeared the whole lazy regiment that was wont to infest the village tavern, comprehending three or four individuals who had drunk flip beside the bar-roomfire through all the winters and smoked their pipes beneath the stoop through all the summers since Ethan Brand's departure. Laughing boisterously, and mingling all their voices together in unceremonious talk, they now burst into the moonshine and narrow streaks of firelight that illuminated the open space before the lime-kiln. Bartram set the door ajar again, flooding the spot with light, that the whole company might get a fair view of Ethan Brand, and he of them.

There, among other old acquaintances, was a once ubiquitous man, now almost extinct, but whom we were formerly sure to encounter at the hotel of every thriving village throughout the country. It was the stage agent. The present specimen of the genus was a wilted and smoke-dried man, wrinkled and red-nosed, in a smartly cut, brown, bobtailed coat, with brass buttons, who, for a length of time unknown, had kept his desk and corner in the bar-room, and was still puffing what seemed to be the same cigar that he had lighted twenty years before. He had great fame as a dry joker, though, perhaps, less on account of any intrinsic humor than from a certain flavor of brandy-toddy and tobacco-smoke, which impregnated all his ideas and expressions, as well as his person. Another well-remembered, though strangely altered, face was that of Lawyer Giles, as people still called him in courtesy; an elderly ragamuffin, in his soiled shirt-

sleeves and tow-cloth trousers. This poor fellow had been an attorney, in what he called his better days, a sharp practitioner, and in great vogue among the village litigants ; but flip, and sling, and toddy, and cocktails, imbibed at all hours, morning, noon, and night, had caused him to slide from intellectual to various kinds and degrees of bodily labor, till at last, to adopt his own phrase, he slid into a soap-vat. In other words, Giles was now a soap-boiler, in a small way. He had come to be but the fragment of a human being, a part of one foot having been chopped off by an axe, and an entire hand torn away by the devilish grip of a steam-engine. Yet, though the corporeal hand was gone, a spiritual member remained ; for, stretching forth the stump, Giles steadfastly averred that he felt an invisible thumb and fingers with as vivid a sensation as before the real ones were amputated. A maimed and miserable wretch he was ; but one, nevertheless, whom the world could not trample on, and had no right to scorn, either in this or any previous stage of his misfortunes, since he had still kept up the courage and spirit of a man, asked nothing in charity, and with his one hand—and that the left one—fought a stern battle against want and hostile circumstances.

Among the throng, too, came another personage who, with certain points of similarity to Lawyer Giles, had many more of difference. It was the village doctor ; a man of some fifty years, whom, at an earlier period of his life, we introduced as paying a professional visit to Ethan Brand during the latter's supposed insanity. He was now a purple-visaged, rude, and brutal, yet half-gentlemanly, figure, with something wild, ruined, and desperate in his talk, and in all the details of his gesture and manners. Brandy possessed this man like an evil spirit, and made him as surly and savage as a wild beast, and as miserable as a lost soul ; but there was supposed to be in him such wonderful skill, such native gifts of healing, beyond any which medical science could impart, that society caught hold of him, and would not let him sink out of its reach. So, swaying to and fro upon his horse, and grumbling thick accents at the bedside, he visited all the sick chambers for miles about among the mountain towns, and sometimes raised a dying man, as it were, by miracle, or quite as often, no doubt, sent his patient to a grave that was dug many a year too soon. The doctor had an everlasting pipe in his

mouth, and, as somebody said, in allusion to his habit of swearing, it was always alight with hell-fire.

These three worthies pressed forward, and greeted Ethan Brand each after his own fashion, earnestly inviting him to partake of the contents of a certain black bottle, in which, as they averred, he would find something far better worth seeking for than the Unpardonable Sin. No mind which has wrought itself by intense and solitary meditation into a high state of enthusiasm can endure the kind of contact with low and vulgar modes of thought and feeling to which Ethan Brand was now subjected. It made him doubt—and, strange to say, it was a painful doubt—whether he had indeed found the Unpardonable Sin, and found it within himself. The whole question on which he had exhausted life, and more than life, looked like a delusion.

"Leave me," he said bitterly, "ye brute beasts, that have made yourselves so, shriveling up your souls with fiery liquors! I have done with you. Years and years ago I groped into your hearts, and found nothing there for my purpose. Get ye gone!"

"Why, you uncivil scoundrel," cried the fierce doctor, "is that the way you respond to the kindness of your best friends? Then let me tell you the truth. You have no more found the Unpardonable Sin than yonder boy Joe has. You are but a crazy fellow—I told you so twenty years ago—neither better nor worse than a crazy fellow, and the fit companion of old Humphrey here!"

He pointed to an old man, shabbily dressed, with long white hair, thin visage, and unsteady eycs. For some years past this aged person had been wandering about among the hills, inquiring of all travelers whom he met for hi' daughter. The girl, it seemed, had gone off with a company of circus performers, and occasionally tidings of her came to the village, and fine stories were told of her glittering appearance as she rode on horseback in the ring, or performed marvelous feats on the tight-rope.

The white-haired father now approached Ethan Brand, and gazed unsteadily into his face.

"They tell me you have been all over the earth," said he, wringing his hands with earnestness. "You must have seen my daughter, for she makes a grand figure in the world, and everybody goes to see her. Did she send any word to her old father, or say when she was coming back?"

Ethan Brand's eye quailed beneath the old man's. That daughter, from whom he so earnestly desired a word of greeting, was the Esther of our tale, the very girl whom, with such cold and remorseless purpose, Ethan Brand had made the subject of a psychological experiment, and wasted, absorbed, and perhaps annihilated her soul, in the process.

"Yes," murmured he, turning away from the hoary wanderer, "it is no delusion. There is an Unpardonable Sin!"

While these things were passing, a merry scene was going forward in the area of cheerful light, beside the spring and before the door of the hut. A number of the youth of the village, young men and girls, had hurried up the hillside, impelled by curiosity to see Ethan Brand, the hero of so many a legend familiar to their childhood. Finding nothing, however, very remarkable in his aspect—nothing but a sunburnt wayfarer, in plain garb and dusty shoes, who sat looking into the fire as if he fancied pictures among the coals—these young people speedily grew tired of observing him. As it happened, there was other amusement at hand. An old German Jew, traveling with a diorama on his back, was passing down the mountain road toward the village just as the party turned aside from it, and, in hopes of eking out the profits of the day, the showman had kept them company to the lime-kiln.

"Come, old Dutchman," cried one of the young men, "let us see your pictures, if you can swear they are worth looking at!"

"Oh, yes, Captain," answered the Jew—whether as a matter of courtesy or craft, he styled everybody Captain—"I shall show you, indeed, some very superb pictures!" So, placing his box in a proper position, he invited the young men and girls to look through the glass orifices of the machine, and proceeded to exhibit a series of the most outrageous scratchings and daubings, as specimens of the fine arts, that ever an itinerant showman had the face to impose upon his circle of spectators. The pictures were worn out, moreover, tattered, full of cracks and wrinkles, dingy with tobacco-smoke, and otherwise in a most pitiable condition. Some purported to be cities, public edifices, and ruined castles in Europe; others represented Napoleon's battles and Nelson's sea-fights; and in the midst of these would be seen a gigantic, brown, hairy hand—which might have been mistaken for the Hand of Destiny, though, in truth, it was only the show-

man's—pointing its forefinger to various scenes of the conflict, while its owner gave historical illustrations. When, with much merriment at its abominable deficiency of merit, the exhibition was concluded, the German bade little Joe put his head into the box. Viewed through the magnifying-glasses, the boy's round, rosy visage assumed the strangest imaginable aspect of an immense Titanic child, the mouth grinning broadly, and the eyes and every other feature overflowing with fun at the joke. Suddenly, however, that merry face turned pale, and its expression changed to horror, for this easily impressed and excitable child had become sensible that the eye of Ethan Brand was fixed upon him through the glass.

"You make the little man to be afraid, Captain," said the German Jew, turning up the dark and strong outline of his visage from his stooping posture. "But look again, and, by chance, I shall cause you to see somewhat that is very fine, upon my word!"

Ethan Brand gazed into the box for an instant, and then, starting back, looked fixedly at the German. What had he seen? Nothing, apparently; for a curious youth, who had peeped in almost at the same moment, beheld only a vacant space of canvas.

"I remember you now," muttered Ethan Brand to the showman.

"Ah, Captain," whispered the Jew of Nuremberg, with a dark smile, "I find it to be a heavy matter in my show-box—this Unardonable Sin! By my faith, Captain, it has wearied my shoulders, this long day, to carry it over the mountain."

"Peace," answered Ethan Brand, sternly, "or get thee into the furnace yonder!"

The Jew's exhibition had scarcely concluded, when a great elderly dog—who seemed to be his own master, as no person in the company laid claim to him—saw fit to render himself the object of public notice. Hitherto he had shown himself a very quiet, well-disposed old dog, going round from one to another, and, by way of being sociable, offering his rough head to be patted by any kindly hand that would take so much trouble. But now, all of a sudden, this grave and venerable quadruped, of his own mere motion, and without the slightest suggestion from

anybody else, began to run round after his tail, which, to heighten the absurdity of the proceeding, was a great deal shorter than it should have been. Never was seen such headlong eagerness in pursuit of an object that could not possibly be attained; never was heard such a tremendous outbreak of growling, snarling, barking, and snapping—as if one end of the ridiculous brute's body were at deadly and most unforgivable enmity with the other. Faster and faster, round about went the cur; and faster and still faster fled the unapproachable brevity of his tail; and louder and fiercer grew his yells of rage and animosity; until, utterly exhausted, and as far from the goal as ever, the foolish old dog ceased his performance as suddenly as he had begun it. The next moment he was as mild, quiet, sensible, and respectable in his deportment as when he first scraped acquaintance with the company.

As may be supposed, the exhibition was greeted with universal laughter, clapping of hands, and shouts of encore, to which the canine performer responded by wagging all that there was to wag of his tail, but appeared totally unable to repeat his very successful effort to amuse the spectators.

Meanwhile, Ethan Brand had resumed his seat upon the log, and moved, it might be, by a perception of some remote analogy between his own case and that of this self-pursuing cur, he broke into the awful laugh, which, more than any other token, expressed the condition of his inward being. From that moment the merriment of the party was at an end; they stood aghast, dreading lest the inauspicious sound should be reverberated around the horizon, and that mountain would thunder it to mountain, and so the horror be prolonged upon their ears. Then, whispering one to another that it was late—that the moon was almost down—that the August night was growing chill—they hurried homewards, leaving the lime-burner and little Joe to deal as they might with their unwelcome guest. Save for these three human beings, the open space on the hillside was a solitude, set in a vast gloom of forest. Beyond that darksome verge the firelight glimmered on the stately trunks and almost black foliage of pines, intermixed with the lighter verdure of sapling oaks, maples, and poplars, while here and there lay the gigantic corpses of dead trees, decaying on the leaf-strewn soil. And it seemed to little Joe—a timorous and imaginative child—that the silent forest was holding its breath

until some fearful thing should happen.

Ethan Brand thrust more wood into the fire, and closed the door of the kiln; then, looking over his shoulder at the lime-burner and his son, he bade, rather than advised, them to retire to rest.

"For myself, I cannot sleep," said he. "I have matters that it concerns me to meditate upon. I will watch the fire, as I used to do in the old time."

"And call the Devil out of the furnace to keep you company, I suppose," muttered Bartram, who had been making intimate acquaintance with the black bottle above mentioned. "But watch, if you like, and call as many devils as you like! For my part, I shall be all the better for a snooze. Come, Joe!"

As the boy followed his father into the hut, he looked back at the wayfarer, and the tears came into his eyes, for his tender spirit had an intuition of the bleak and terrible loneliness in which this man had enveloped himself.

When they had gone, Ethan Brand sat listening to the crackling of the kindled wood, and looking at the little spurts of fire that issued through the chinks of the door. These trifles, however, once so familiar, had but the slightest hold of his attention, while deep within his mind he was reviewing the gradual but marvellous change that had been wrought upon him by the search to which he had devoted himself. He remembered how the night dew had fallen upon him—how the dark forest had whispered to him—how the stars had gleamed upon him—a simple and loving man, watching his fire in the years gone by, and ever musing as it burnéd. He remembered with what tenderness, with what love and sympathy for mankind, and what pity for human guilt and woe, he had first begun to contemplate those ideas which afterwards became the inspiration of his life; with what reverence he had then looked into the heart of man, viewing it as a temple originally divine, and, however desecrated, still to be held sacred by a brother; with what awful fear he had deprecated the success of his pursuit, and prayed that the Unpardonable Sin might never be revealed to him. Then ensued that vast intellectual development, which, in its progress, disturbed the counterpoise between his mind and heart. The Idea that possessed his life had operated as a means of education; it had gone on cultivating his powers to the highest point of which they were susceptible; it had raised

him from the level of an unlettered laborer to stand on a starlit eminence, whither the philosophers of the earth, laden with the lore of universities, might vainly strive to clamber after him. So much for the intellect! But where was the heart? That indeed had withered—had contracted—had hardened—had perished! It had ceased to partake of the universal throb. He had lost his hold of the magnetic chain of humanity. He was no longer a brother-man, opening the chambers or the dungeons of our common nature by the key of holy sympathy, which gave him a right to share in all its secrets; he was now a cold observer, looking on mankind as the subject of his experiment, and, at length, converting man and woman to be his puppets, and pulling the wires that moved them to such degrees of crime as were demanded for his study.

Thus Ethan Brand became a fiend. He began to be so from the moment that his moral nature had ceased to keep the pace of improvement with his intellect. And now, as his highest effort and inevitable development—as the bright and gorgeous flower and rich, delicious fruit of his life's labor—he had produced the Unpardonable Sin!

"What more have I to seek? What more to achieve?" said Ethan Brand to himself. "My task is done, and well done!"

Starting from the log with a certain alacrity in his gait and ascending the hillock of earth that was raised against the stone circumference of the lime-kiln, he thus reached the top of the structure. It was a space of perhaps ten feet across, from edge to edge, presenting a view of the upper surface of the immense mass of broken marble with which the kiln was heaped. All these innumerable blocks and fragments of marble were red-hot and vividly on fire, sending up great spouts of blue flame, which quivered aloft and danced madly, as within a magic circle, and sank and rose again, with continual and multitudinous activity. As the lonely man bent forward over this terrible body of fire, the blasting heat smote up against his person with a breath that, it might be supposed, would have scorched and shrivelled him up in a moment.

Ethan Brand stood erect, and raised his arms on high. The blue flames played upon his face, and imparted the wild and ghastly light which alone could have suited its expression; it was that

of a fiend on the verge of plunging into his gulf of intensest torment.

"O Mother Earth," cried he, "who are no more my Mother, and into whose bosom this frame shall never be resolved! O mankind, whose brotherhood I have cast off, and trampled thy great heart beneath my feet! O stars of heaven, that shone on me of old, as if to light me onward and upward!—farewell all, and forever. Come, deadly element of Fire—henceforth my familiar friend! Embrace me, as I do thee!"

That night the sound of a fearful peal of laughter rolled heavily through the sleep of the lime-burner and his little son; dim shapes of horror and anguish haunted their dreams, and seemed still present in the rude hovel, when they opened their eyes to the daylight.

"Up, boy, up!" cried the lime-burner, staring about him. "Thank Heaven, the night is gone, at last; and rather than pass such another, I would watch my lime-kiln, wide awake, for a twelve-month. This Ethan Brand, with his humbug of an Unpardonable Sin, has done me no such mighty favor in taking my place!"

He issued from the hut, followed by little Joe, who kept fast hold of his father's hand. The early sunshine was already pouring its gold upon the mountain-tops, and though the valleys were still in shadow, they smiled cheerfully in the promise of the bright day that was hastening onward. The village, completely shut in by hills, which swelled away gently about it, looked as if it had rested peacefully in the hollow of the great hand of Providence. Every dwelling was distinctly visible; the little spires of the two churches pointed upwards, and caught a fore-glimmering o' brightness from the sun-gilt skies upon their gilded weathercocks. The tavern was astir, and the figure of the old, smoke-dried stage agent, cigar in mouth, was seen beneath the stoop. Old Greylock was glorified with a golden cloud upon his head. Scattered likewise over the breasts of the surrounding mountains there were heaps of hoary mist, in fantastic shapes, some of them far down into the valley, others high up towards the summits, and still others, of the same family of mist or cloud, hovering in the gold radiance of the upper atmosphere. Stepping from one to another of the clouds that rested on the hills, and thence to the loftier brotherhood that sailed in air, it seemed ~~a mortal man~~

might thus ascend into the heavenly regions. Earth was so mingled with sky that it was a day-dream to look at it.

To supply that charm of the familiar and homely, which Nature so readily adopts into a scene like this, the stage-coach was rattling down the mountain road, and the driver sounded his horn, while Echo caught up the notes, and intertwined them into a rich and varied and elaborate harmony, of which the original performer could lay claim to little share. The great hills played a concert among themselves, each contributing a strain of airy sweetness.

Little Joe's face brightened at once.

"Dear father," cried he, skipping cheerily to and fro, "that strange man is gone, and the sky and the mountains all seem glad of it!"

"Yes," growled the lime-burner, with an oath, "but he has let the fire go down, and no thanks to him if five hundred bushels of lime are not spoiled. If I catch the fellow hereabouts again, I shall feel like tossing him into the furnace!"

With his long pole in his hand, he ascended to the top of the kiln. After a moment's pause, he called to his son:—

"Come up here, Joe!" said he.

So little Joe ran up the hillock, and stood by his father's side. The marble was all burnt into perfect snow-white lime. But on its surface, in the midst of the circle—snow-white, too, and thoroughly converted into lime—lay a human skeleton, in the attitude of a person who, after long toil, lies down to long repose. Within the ribs—strange to say—was the shape of a human heart.

"Was the fellow's heart made of marble?" cried Bartram, in some perplexity at this phenomenon. "At any rate, it is burnt into what looks like special good lime; and, taking all the bones together, my kiln is half a bushel the richer for him."

So saying, the rude lime-burner lifted his pole, and, letting it fall upon the skeleton, the relics of Ethan Brand were crumbled into fragments.

OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES

1809-1894

Born in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Graduated from Harvard. Studied law and medicine, and for thirty-five years held the chair of anatomy and physiology in the Harvard Medical School. All his life was spent in Boston, save for a short journey to Paris in his youth. His literary career began when he was twenty-one with the publication of a poem called forth by some political event. Much of Holmes' work is scientific, particularly medical. But "The Autocrat of the Breakfast Table," published when he was chief contributor to the "Atlantic Monthly," marks the beginning of humorous American literature.

A VISIT TO THE AUTOCRAT'S LANDLADY

THE door was opened by a stout, red-armed lump of a woman, who, in reply to my question, said her name was Bridget, but Biddy they calls her mostly. There was a rickety hatstand in the entry, upon which, by the side of a school-boy's cap, there hung a broad-brimmed white hat, somewhat fatigued by use, but looking gentle and kindly, as I have often noticed good old gentlemen's hats do, after they have worn them for a time. The door of the dining-room was standing wide open, and I went in. A long table, covered with an oil-cloth, ran up and down the length of the room, and yellow wooden chairs were ranged about it. She showed me where the Gentleman used to sit, and, at the last part of the time, the Schoolmistress next to him. Their chairs were like the rest, but it was odd enough to notice that they stood close together, touching each other, while all the rest were straggling and separate. I observed that peculiar atmospheric flavor which has been described by Mr. Balzac (the French story-teller who borrows so many things from some of our American leading writers), under the name of *odeur de pension*. It is, as one may say, an olfactory perspective of an endless vista of departed breakfasts, dinners, and suppers. It is similar, if not identical, in all temperate climates; a kind of neutral tint, which forms the perpetual background upon which the banquet of to-day strikes out its keener but more transitory aroma. I don't think it necessary to go into any further particulars, because this atmospheric character has the effect of making the dining-rooms of all boarding-houses seem very

much alike; and the accident of a hair-cloth sofa, cold, shiny, slippery, prickly,—or a veneered sideboard, with a scale off here and there, and a knob or two missing,—or a portrait, with one hand half under its coat, the other resting on a pious-looking book,—these accidents, and such as these, make no great difference.

The landlady soon presented herself, and I followed her into the parlor, which was a decent apartment, with a smart center-table, on which lay an accordion, a recent number of the "Pactolian," a gilt-edged, illustrated book or two, and a copy of the works of that distinguished native author, to whom I feel very spiteful, on account of his having, some years ago, attacked a near friend of mine, and whom, on Christian principles, I do not mention,—though I have noticed, that, where there is an accordion on the table, his books are apt to be lying near it.

The landlady was a "wilted" (not exactly withered), sad-eyed woman, of the thin-blooded sort, but firm fibred, and sharpened and made shrewd by her calling, so that the look with which she ran me over, in the light of a possible boarder, was so searching, that I was half put down by it. I informed her of my errand, which was to make some inquiries concerning two former boarders of hers, in whom a portion of the public had expressed some interest, and of whom I should be glad to know certain personal details,—as to their habits, appearance, and so on. Any information she might furnish would be looked upon in the light of a literary contribution to the pages of the "Oceanic Miscellany," and be compensated with the well-known liberality of the publishers of that spirited, enterprising, and very popular periodical.

Up to this point, the landlady's countenance had kept that worried, watchful look, which poor women, who have to fight the world single-handed, sooner or later grow into. But now her features relaxed a little. The blow which had crushed her life had shattered her smile, and, as the web of shivered expression shot off its rays across her features, I fancied that Grief had written her face all over with W's, to mark her as one of his forlorn flock of Widows.

The report here given is partly from the conversation held with the landlady at that time, and partly from written notes which she furnished me; for, finding that she was to be a contributor

to the "Oceanic Miscellany," and that in that capacity she would be entitled to the ample compensation offered by the liberal proprietors of that admirably conducted periodical,—which we are pleased to learn has been growing in general favor, and which, the public may be assured, no pains will be spared to render superior in every respect,—I say, finding that she was to be handsomely remunerated, she entered into the subject with great zeal, both verbally and by letter. The reader will see that I sometimes follow her orthography, and sometimes her pronunciation, as I may have taken it from writing or from speech.

THE LANDLADY'S ACCOUNT.

There is two vacant places at my table, which I should be pleased to fill with two gentlemen, or with a gentleman and his wife, or any respectable people, be they married or single. It is about the gentleman and the lady that used to set in them places, that inquiries is bein' made. Some has wrote, and some has spoke, and a good many folks, that was unbeknown to me, has come in and wanted to see the place where they used to set, and some days it's been nothin' but ring, ring, ring, from mornin' till night.

Folks will be curious about them that has wrote in the papers. There's my daughter couldn't be easy no way till she'd got a profeel of one of them authors, to hang up right over the head of her bed. That's the gentleman that writes stories in the papers, some in the same way this gentleman did, I expect, that inquirjes is made about.

I'm a poor woman, that tries to get an honest livin', and works hard enough for it;—lost my husband, and buried five children, and have two livin' ones to support. It's a great loss to me, losin' them two boarders; and if there's anything in them papers he left in that desk that will fetch anything at any of the shops where they buy such things, I'm sure I wish you'd ask the printer to step round here, and stop in and see what any of 'em is worth. I'll let you have one or two of 'em, and then you can see whether you don't know anybody that would take the lot. I suppose you'll put what I tell you into shape, for, like as not, I sha'n't write it out nor talk jest as folks that make books do.

This gentleman warn't no great of a gentleman to look at. Being of a very moderate dimension,—five foot five *he* said, but five foot four more likely, and I've heerd him say he didn't

weigh much over a hundred and twenty pound. He was light-completed rather than darksome, and was one of them smooth-faced people that keep their baird and whiskers cut close, jest as if they'd be very troublesome if they let 'em grow,—instead of layin' out their face in grass, as my poor husband that's dead and gone used to say. He was a well-behaved gentleman at table, only talked a good deal, and pretty loud sometimes, and had a way of turnin' up his nose when he didn't like what folks said, that one of my boarders, who is a very smart young man, said he couldn't stand, no how, and used to make faces and poke fun at him whenever he see him do it.

He never said a word against any vittles that was set before him, but I mistrusted that he was more partickerlar in his eatin' than he wanted folks to know of, for I've knowed him make believe to eat, and leave the vittles on his plate when he didn't seem to fancy 'em; but he was very careful never to hurt my feelin's, and I don't belief he'd have spoke, if he had found a tadpole in a dish of chowder. But nothin' could hurry him when he was about his vittles. Many's the time I've seen that gentleman keepin' two or three of 'em settin' round the breakfast-table after the rest had swallowed their meal, and the things were cleared off, and Bridget was a-waitin' to get the cloth away,—and there that little man would set with a tumbler of sugar and water,—what he used to call O Sukray,—a-talkin' and a-talkin', —and sometimes he would laugh, and sometimes the tears would come into his eyes,—which was a kind of grayish blue eyes,—and there he'd set and set, and my boy Benjamin Franklin hangin' round and gettin' late for school and wantin' an excuse, and an old gentleman that's one of my boarders, a-listenin' as if he wa'n't no older than my Ben. Franklin, and that school-mistress settin' jest as if she'd been bewitched, and you might stick pins into her without her hollerin'. He was a master hand to talk when he got a'goin'. But he never would have no disputes nor long argerments at my table, and I liked him all the better for that; for I had a boarder once that never let nothin' go by without disputin' of it, till nobody knowed what he believed and what he didn't believe, only they was pretty sure he didn't believe the side he was a-disputin' for, and some of 'em said, that, if you wanted him to go any partickerlar way, you must do with him just as folks do that drive—well, them obstinate creeturs

that squeal so,—for I don't like to name such creeturs in connexion with a gentleman that paid his board regular, and was a very smart man, and knowed a great deal, only his knowledge all laid crosswise, as one of 'em used to say, after t' other one had shet him up till his mouth wa'n't of no more use to him than if it had been a hole in the back of his head. This wa'n't no sech gentleman. One of my boarders used to say that he always said exactly what he was a mind to, and stuck his idees out jest like them that sells pears outside their shop-winders,—some is three cents, some is two cents, and some is only one cent, and if you don't like, you needn't buy, but them's the articles and them's the prices, and if you want 'em take 'em, and if you don't, go about your business, and don't stand mellerin' of 'em with your thumbs all day till you've sp'ilts 'em for other folks.

He was a man that loved to stick round home as much as any cat you ever see in your life. He used to say he'd as lief have a tooth pulled as go away anywhere. Always got sick, he said, when he went away, and never sick when he didn't. Pretty nigh killed himself goin' about lecterin' two or three winters,—talkin' in cold country lyceums,—as he used to say,—goin' home to cold parlors and bein' treated to cold apples and cold water, and then goin' up into a cold bed in a cold chamber, and comin' home next mornin' with a cold in his head as bad as the horse-distemper. Then he'd look kind of sorry for havin' said it, and tell how kind some of the good women was to him,—how one spread an edder-down comforter for him, and another fixed up somethin' hot for him after the lecter, and another one said, "There now, you smoke that cigar of yours after the lecter, jest as if you was at home,"—and if they'd all been like that, he'd have gone on lecturing forever, but, as it was, he had got poooty nigh enough of it, and preferred a nateral death to puttin' himself out of the world by such violent means as lecterin'.

He used to say that he was always good company enough, if he wasn't froze to death, and if he wasn't pinned in a corner so't he couldn't clear out when he'd got as much as he wanted. But he was a dreadful uneven creetur in his talk, and I've heerd a smart young man that's one of my boarders say, he believed he had a lid to the top of his head, and took his brains out and left 'em upstairs sometimes when he come down in the mornin'.—About his ways, he was spry and quick and impatient, and, ex-

cept in a good company,—he used to say,—where he could get away at any minute, he didn't like to set still very long to once, but wanted to be off walkin' or rowin' round in one of them queer boats of his, and he was the solitariest creetur in his goin's about (except when he could get that schoolmistress to trail round with him) that ever you see in your life. He used to say that usin' two eyes and two legs at once, and keepin' one tongue a-goin', too, was too sharp practice for him; so he had a way of dodgin' round all sorts of odd streets, I've heerd say, where he wouldn't meet people that would stick to him.

It didn't take much to please him. Sometimes it would be a big book he'd lug home, and sometimes it would be a mikerscope, an sometimes it would be a dreadful old-lookin' fiddle that he'd picked up somewhere, and kept a-screechin' on, sayin' all the while that it was just as smooth as a flute. Then ag'in I'd hear him laughin' out all alone, and I'd go up and find him readin' some verses that he'd been makin'. But jest as like as not I'd go in another time, and find him cryin',—but he'd wipe his eyes and try not to show it,—and it was all nothin' but some more verses he'd been a-writin'. I've heerd him say that it was put down in one of them ancient books, that a man must cry himself, if he wants to make other folks cry; but, says he, you can't make 'em neither laugh nor cry, if you don't try on them feelin's yourself before you send your work to the customers.

He was a temperate man, and always encouraged temperance by drinkin' jest what he was a mind to, and that was generally water. You couldn't scare him with names, though. I remember a young minister that's go'n' to be, that boards at my house, askin' once what was the safest strong drink for them that had to take somethin' for the stomach's sake and thine awful infirmities. *Aqua fortis*, says he,—because you know that'll eat your insides out, if you get it too strong, and so you always mind how much you take. Next to that, says he, rum's the safest for a wise man, and small beer for a fool.

I never mistrusted anything about him and that schoolmistress till I heerd they was keepin' company, and was go'n' to be married. But I might have knowed it well enough by his smartin' himself up the way he did, and partin' the hair on the back of his head, and gettin' a blue coat with brass buttons, and wearin' them dreadful tight little French boots that used to stand outside

his door to be blacked, and stickin' round schoolma'am, and follerin' of her with his eyes; but then he was always fond of ladies, and used to sing with my daughter, and wrote his name out in a blank book she keeps,—them that has daughters of their own will keep their eyes on 'em,—and I've often heerd him say he was fond of music and picters,—and she worked a beautiful pattern for a chair of his once, that he seemed to set a good deal by; but I ha'n't no fault to find, and ther is them that my daughter likes and them that likes her.

As to schoolma'am, I ha'n't a word to say that a'n't favorable, and don't harbor no unkind feelin' to her, and never knowed them that did. When she first come to board at my house, I hadn't any idee she'd live long. She was all dressed in black; and her face looked so delicate, I expected before six months was over to see a plate of glass over it, and a Bible and a bunch of flowers layin' on the lid of the—well, I don't like to talk about it; for when she first come, and said her mother was dead, and she was alone in the world, except one sister out West, and onlocked her trunk and showed me her things, and took out her little purse and showed me her money, and said that was all the property she had in the world but her courage and her education, and would I take her and keep her till she could get some scholars—I couldn't say not one word, but jest went up to her and kissed har and bu'st out a-cryin' so as I never cried since I buried the last of them five children that lays in the buryin'-ground with their father, and a place for one more grown person betwixt him and the shortest of them five graves, where my baby is waitin' for its mother.

[The landlady stopped her and shed a few still tears, such as poor women who have been wrung out almost dry by fierce griefs lose calmly, without sobs or hysterical convulsions, when they show the scar of a healed sorrow.]

— The schoolma'am had jest been killin' herself for a year and a half with waitin' and tendin' and watchin' with that sick mother that was dead now and she was in mournin' for. *She* didn't say so, but I got the story out of her, and then I knowed why she looked so dreadful pale and poor. By and by she begun to get some scholars, and then she would come home sometimes so weak and faint that I was afraid she would drop. One day I handed her a bottle of camphire to smell of, and she took a

smell of it, and I thought she'd have fainted right away. Oh, says she, when she come to, I've breathed that smell for a whole year and more, and it kills me to breathe it again!

The first thing that ever I see pass between the gentleman inquiries is made about, and her, was on occasion of his makin' some very searchin' remarks about griefs, sech as loss of friends and so on. I see her fix her eye steady on him, and then she kind of trembled and turned white, and the next thing I knew was she was all of a heap on the floor. I remember he looked into her face then, and seemed to be seized as if it was with a start or spasm-like,—but I thought nothin' more of it, supposin' it was because he felt so bad at makin' her faint away.

Some has asked me what kind of a young woman she was to look at. Well, folks differ as to what is likely and what is homely. I've seen them that was as pretty as picters in my eyes: cheeks jest as rosy as they could be, and hair all shiny and curly, and little mouths with lips as red as sealin'-wax, and yet one of my boarders that had a great name for makin' marble figgers would say such kind of good looks warn't of no account. I knowed a young lady once that a man drowned himself because she wouldn't marry him, and she might have had her pick of a dozen, but I didn't call her anything great in the way of looks. All I can say is, that, whether she was pretty or not, she looked like a young woman that knowed what was good and had a nateral love for it, and she had about as clear an eye and about as pleasant a smile as any man ought to want for every-day company. I've seen a good many young ladies that could talk faster than she could; but if you'd seen her or heerd her when our boardin'-house caught afire, or when there was anything to be done besides speech-makin', I guess you'd like to have stood still and looked on, jest to see that young woman's way of goin' to work. Dark, ruther than light; and slim, but strong in the arms—perhaps from liftin' that old mother about; for I've seen her heavin' one end of a big heavy chest round that I shouldn't have thought of touchin',—and yet her hands was little and white. Dressed very plain, but neat, and wore her hair smooth. I used to wonder sometimes she didn't wear some kind of ornaments, bein' a likely young woman, and havin' her way to make in the world, and seein' my daughter wearin' jewelry, which sets her off so much, every day. She never would

—nothin' but a breastpin with her mother's hair in it, and sometimes one little black cross. That made me think she was a Roman Catholic, especially when she got a picter of the Virgin Mary and hung it up in her room; so I asked her, and she shook her head and said these very words,—that she never saw a church-door so narrow she couldn't go in through it, nor so wide that all the Creator's goodness and glory could enter it; and then she dropped her eyes, and went to work on a flannel petticoat she was makin',—which I knowed, but she didn't tell me, was for a poor old woman.

I've said enough about them two boarders, but I believe it's all true. Their places is vacant, and I should be very glad to fill 'em with two gentlemen, or with a gentleman and his wife, or any respectable people, be they married or single.

I've heerd some talk about a friend of that gentleman's comin' to take his place. That's the gentleman that he calls "the Professor," and I'm sure I hope there is sech a man; only all I can say is, I never see him, and none of my boarders ever see him, and that smart young man that I was speakin' of says he don't believe there's no sech person as him, nor that other one that he called "the Poet." I don't much care whether folks professes or makes poems, if they makes themselves agreeable, and pays their board regular. I'm a poor woman, that tries to get an honest livin', and works hard enough for it; lost my husband, and buried five children....

Excuse me, dear Madam, I said,—looking at my watch,—but you spoke of certain papers which your boarder left, and which you were ready to dispose of for the pages of the "Oceanic Miscellany."

The landlady's face splintered again into the wreck of the broken dimples of better days.—She should be much obleeged, if I would look at them, she said—and went up-stairs and got a small desk containing loose papers. I looked them hastily over, and selected one of the shortest pieces handed the landlady a check which astonished her, and send the poem thus happily obtained as an appendix to my report. *If I should find others adapted to the pages of the spirited periodical which has done so much to develop and satisfy the intellectual appetite of the American public, and to extend the name of its enterprising publishers throughout the reading world, I shall present them in future numbers of the "Oceanic Miscellany."*

WASHINGTON IRVING

1783-1859

Born in New York of an established family. His was America's greatest literary name in the earlier part of the nineteenth century. Irving studied law, but soon abandoned it for literature. His first work, "A History of New York by Diedrich Knickerbocker," a screaming burlesque, made his fame when it first appeared in 1809. Thereafter Irving's time was divided among travels, literature, and political duties. He travelled extensively in England, where he met Scott and the Irish poet Thomas Moore. In 1829 appointed secretary to the U. S. legation at Madrid. The last years of his life were spent on his estate, Sunnyside-on-the-Hudson. Among his works are "The Sketch Book," "The Conquest of Granada," and "Life of Washington."

RIP VAN WINKLE

WHOEVER has made a voyage up the Hudson must remember the Kaatskill mountains. They are a dismembered branch of the great Appalachian family, and are seen away to the west of the river, swelling up to a noble height, and lording it over the surrounding country. Every change of season, every change of weather, indeed, every hour of the day, produces some change in the magical hues and shapes of these mountains, and they are regarded by all good wives, far and near, as perfect barometers. When the weather is fair and settled, they are clothed in blue and purple, and print their bold outlines on the clear evening sky; but sometimes, when the rest of the landscape is cloudless, they will gather a hood of gray vapors about their summits, which, in the last rays of the setting sun, will glow and light up like a crown of glory.

At the foot of these fairy mountains, the voyager may have descried the light smoke curling up from a village, whose shingle-roofs gleam among the trees, just where the blue tints of the upland melt away into the fresh green of the nearer landscape. It is a little village, of great antiquity, having been founded by some of the Dutch colonists in the early times of the province, just about the beginning of the government of the good Peter Stuyvesant (may he rest in peace!), and there were some of the houses of the original settlers standing within a few years, built of small yellow bricks brought from Holland, having latticed

windows and gable fronts, surmounted with weathercocks.

In that same village, and in one of these very houses (which, to tell the precise truth, was sadly time-worn and weather-beaten), there lived, many years since, while the country was yet a province of Great Britain, a simple, good-natured fellow, of the name of Rip Van Winkle. He was a descendant of the Van Winkles who figured so gallantly in the chivalrous days of Peter Stuyvesant, and accompanied him to the siege of Fort Christina. He inherited, however, but little of the martial character of his ancestors. I have observed that he was a simple, good-natured man; he was, moreover, a kind neighbor, and an obedient, hen-pecked husband. Indeed, to the latter circumstance might be owing that meekness of spirit which gained him such universal popularity; for those men are most apt to be obsequious and conciliating abroad, who are under the discipline of shrews at home. Their tempers, doubtless, are rendered pliant and malleable in the fiery furnace of domestic tribulation; and a curtain-lecture is worth all the sermons in the world for teaching the virtues of patience and long-suffering. A termagant wife may, therefore, in some respects, be considered a tolerable blessing; and if so, Rip Van Winkle was thrice blessed.

Certain it is, that he was a great favorite among all the good wives of the village, who, as usual with the amiable sex, took his part in all family squabbles; and never failed, whenever they talked those matters over in their evening gossipings, to lay all the blame on Dame Van Winkle. The children of the village, too, would shout with joy whenever he approached. He assisted at their sports, made their playthings, taught them to fly kites and shoot marbles, and told them long stories of ghosts, witches, and Indians. Whenever he went dodging about the village, he was surrounded by a troop of them, hanging on his skirts, clambering on his back, and playing a thousand tricks on him with impunity; and not a dog would bark at him throughout the neighborhood.

The great error in Rip's composition was an insuperable aversion to all kinds of profitable labor. It could not be from the want of assiduity or perseverance; for he would sit on a wet rock, with a rod as long and heavy as a Tartar's lance, and fish all day without a murmur, even though he should not be encouraged by a single nibble. He would carry a fowling-piece on his

shoulder for hours together, trudging through woods and swamps, and up hill and down dale, to shoot a few squirrels or wild pigeons. He would never refuse to assist a neighbor even in the roughest toil, and was a foremost man at all country frolics for husking Indian corn, or building stone fences; the women of the village, too, used to employ him to run their errands, and do such little odd jobs as their less obliging husbands would not do for them. In a word, Rip was ready to attend to anybody's business but his own; but as to doing family duty, and keeping his farm in order, he found it impossible.

In fact, he declared it was no use to work on his farm; it was the most pestilent little piece of ground in the whole country; everything about it went wrong, and would go wrong, in spite of him. His fences were continually falling to pieces; his cow would either go astray, or get among the cabbages; weeds were sure to grow quicker in his fields than anywhere else; the rain always made a point of setting in just as he had some out-door work to do; so that though his matrimonial estate had dwindled away under his management, acre by acre, until there was little more left than a mere patch of Indian corn and potatoes, yet it was the worst conditioned farm in the neighborhood.

His children, too, were as ragged and wild as if they belonged to nobody. His son Rip, an urchin begotten in his own likeness, promised to inherit the habits, with the old clothes, of his father. He was generally seen trooping like a colt at his mother's heels, equipped in a pair of his father's cast-off galligaskins, which he had much ado to hold up with one hand, as a fine lady does her train in bad weather.

Rip Van Winkle, however, was one of those happy mortals, of foolish, well-oiled dispositions, who take the world easy, eat white bread or brown, whichever can be got with least thought or trouble, and would rather starve on a penny than work for a pound. If left to himself, he would have whistled life away in perfect contentment; but his wife kept continually dinning in his ears about his idleness, his carelessness, and the ruin he was bringing on his family. Morning, noon, and night, her tongue was incessantly going, and everything he said or did was sure to produce a torrent of household eloquence. Rip had but one way of replying to all lectures of the kind, and that, by frequent use, had grown into a habit. He shrugged his shoulders, shook his

head, cast up his eyes, but said nothing. This, however, always provoked a fresh volley from his wife; so that he was fain to draw off his forces, and take to the outside of the house—the only side which, in truth, belongs to a hen-pecked husband.

Rip's sole domestic adherent was his dog Wolf, who was as much hen-pecked as his master; for Dame Van Winkle regarded them as companions in idleness, and even looked upon Wolf with an evil eye, as the cause of his master's going so often astray. True it is, in all points of spirit befitting an honorable dog, he was as courageous an animal as ever scoured the woods; but what courage can withstand the ever-during and all-besetting terrors of a woman's tongue. The moment Wolf entered the house his crest fell, his tail drooped to the ground, or curled between his legs, he sneaked about with a gallows air, casting many a sidelong glance at Dame Van Winkle, and at the least flourish of a broom-stick or ladle he would fly to the door with yelping precipitation.

Times grew worse and worse with Rip Van Winkle as years of matrimony rolled on; a tart temper never mellows with age, and a sharp tongue is the only edged tool that grows keener with constant use. For a long while he used to console himself, when driven from home, by frequenting a kind of perpetual club of the sages, philosophers, and other idle personages of the village, which held its sessions on a bench before a small inn, designated by a rubicund portrait of His Majesty George the Third. Here they used to sit in the shade through a long, lazy summer's day, talking listlessly over village gossip, or telling endless sleepy stories about nothing. But it would have been worth any statesman's money to have heard the profound discussions that sometimes took place, when by chance an old newspaper fell into their hands from some passing traveler. How solemnly they would listen to the contents, as drawled out by Derrick Van Bummel, the schoolmaster, a dapper learned little man, who was not to be daunted by the most gigantic word in the dictionary; and how sagely they would deliberate upon public events some months after they had taken place.

The opinions of this junto were completely controlled by Nicholas Vedder, a patriarch of the village, and landlord of the inn, at the door of which he took his seat from morning till night, just moving sufficiently to avoid the sun and keep in the shade

of a large tree; so that the neighbors could tell the hour by his movements as accurately as by a sun-dial. It is true he was rarely heard to speak, but smoked his pipe incessantly. His adherents, however (for every great man has his adherents), perfectly understood him, and knew how to gather his opinions. When anything that was read or related displeased him, he was observed to smoke his pipe vehemently, and to send forth short, frequent, and angry puffs; but when pleased, he would inhale the smoke slowly and tranquilly, and emit it in light and placid clouds; and sometimes, taking the pipe from his mouth, and letting the fragrant vapor curl about his nose, would gravely nod his head in token of perfect approbation.

From even this stronghold the unlucky Rip was at length routed by his termagant wife, who would suddenly break in upon the tranquillity of the assemblage and call the members all to naught; nor was that august personage, Nicholas Vedder himself, sacred from the daring tongue of this terrible virago, who charged him outright with encouraging her husband in habits of idleness.

Poor Rip was at last reduced almost to despair; and his only alternative, to escape from the labor of the farm and clamor of his wife, was to take gun in hand and stroll away into the woods. Here he would sometimes seat himself at the foot of a tree, and share the contents of his wallet with Wolf, with whom he sympathized as a fellow-sufferer in persecution. "Poor Wolf," he would say, "thy mistress leads thee a dog's life of it; but never mind, my lad, whilst I live thou shalt never want a friend to stand by thee!" Wolf would wag his tail, look wistfully in his master's face; and if dogs can feel pity, I verily believe he reciprocated the sentiment with all his heart.

In a long ramble of the kind on a fine autumnal day, Rip had unconsciously scrambled to one of the highest parts of the Kaatskill mountains. He was after his favorite sport of squirrel-shooting, and the still solitudes had echoed and re-echoed with the reports of his gun. Panting and fatigued, he threw himself, late in the afternoon, on a green knoll, covered with mountain herbage, that crowned the brow of a precipice. From an opening between the trees he could overlook all the lower country for many a mile of rich woodland. He saw at a distance the lordly Hudson, far, far below him, moving on its silent but majestic course, with the reflection of a purple cloud, or the sail of a

lagging bark, here and there sleeping on its glassy bosom, and at last losing itself in the blue highlands.

On the other side he looked down into a deep mountain glen, wild, lonely, and shagged, the bottom filled with fragments from the impending cliffs, and scarcely lighted by the reflected rays of the setting sun. For some time Rip lay musing on this scene; evening was gradually advancing; the mountains began to throw their long blue shadows over the valleys; he saw that it would be dark long before he could reach the village, and he heaved a heavy sigh when he thought of encountering the terrors of Dame Van Winkle.

As he was about to descend, he heard a voice from a distance, hallooing, "Rip Van Winkle! Rip Van Winkle!" He looked around, but could see nothing but a crow winging its solitary flight across the mountain. He thought his fancy must have deceived him, and turned again to descend, when he heard the same cry ring through the still evening air: "Rip Van Winkle! Rip Van Winkle!"—At the same time Wolf bristled up his back, and giving a low growl, skulked to his master's side, looking fearfully down into the glen. Rip now felt a vague apprehension stealing over him; he looked anxiously in the same direction, and perceived a strange figure slowly toiling up the rocks, and bending under the weight of something he carried on his back. He was surprised to see any human being in this lonely and unfrequented place; but supposing it to be some one of the neighborhood in need of assistance, he hastened down to yield it.

On nearer approach he was still more surprised at the singularity of the stranger's appearance. He was a short, square-built old fellow, with thick bushy hair, and a grizzled beard. His dress was of the antique Dutch fashion—a cloth jerkin strapped round the waist—several pairs of breeches, the outer one of ample volume, decorated with rows of buttons down the sides, and bunches at the knees. He bore on his shoulder a stout keg, that seemed full of liquor, and made signs for Rip to approach and assist him with the load. Though rather shy and distrustful of this new acquaintance, Rip complied with his usual alacrity; and mutually relieving one another, they clambered up a narrow gully, apparently the dry bed of a mountain torrent. As they ascended, Rip every now and then heard the long, rolling peals,

like distant thunder, that seemed to issue out of a deep ravine, or rather cleft, between lofty rocks, toward which their rugged path conducted. He paused for an instant, but supposing it to be the muttering of one of those transient thunder-showers which often take place in mountain heights, he proceeded. Passing through the ravine, they came to a hollow, like a small amphitheatre, surrounded by perpendicular precipices, over the brinks of which impending trees shot their branches so that you only caught glimpses of the azure sky and the bright evening cloud. During the whole time Rip and his companion had labored on in silence; for though the former marveled greatly what could be the object of carrying a keg of liquor up this wild mountain, yet there was something strange and incomprehensible about the unknown, that inspired awe and checked familiarity.

On entering the amphitheatre, new objects of wonder presented themselves. On a level spot in the centre was a company of odd-looking personages playing at ninepins. They were dressed in a quaint, outlandish fashion; some wore short doublets, others jerkins, with long knives in their belts, and most of them had enormous breeches of similar style with that of the guide's. Their visages, too, were peculiar; one had a large beard, broad face, and small piggish eyes; the face of another seemed to consist entirely of nose, and was surmounted by a white sugar-loaf hat, set off with a little red cock's tail. They all had beards, of various shapes and colors. There was one who seemed to be the commander. He was a stout old gentleman, with a weather-beaten countenance; he wore a laced doublet, broad belt and hanger, high-crowned hat and feather, red stockings, and high-heeled shoes, with roses in them. The whole group reminded Rip of the figures in an old Flemish painting, in the parlor of Dominie Van Shaick, the village parson, and which had been brought over from Holland at the time of the settlement.

What seemed particularly odd to Rip was, that, though these folks were evidently amusing themselves, yet they maintained the gravest faces, the most mysterious silence, and were, withal, the most melancholy party of pleasure he had ever witnessed. Nothing interrupted the stillness of the scene but the noise of the balls, which, whenever they were rolled, echoed along the mountains like rumbling peals of thunder.

As Rip and his companion approached them, they suddenly desisted from their play, and stared at him with such fixed, statue-like gaze, and such strange, uncouth, lack-lustre countenances, that his heart turned within him, and his knees smote together. His companion now emptied the contents of the keg into large flagons, and made signs to him to wait upon the company. He obeyed with fear and trembling; they quaffed the liquor in profound silence, and then returned to their game.

By degrees Rip's awe and apprehension subsided. He even ventured, when no eye was fixed upon him, to taste the beverage, which he found had much of the flavor of excellent Hollands. He was naturally a thirsty soul, and was soon tempted to repeat the draught. One taste provoked another; and he reiterated his visits to the flagon so often that at length his senses were overpowered, his eyes swam in his head, his head gradually declined, and he fell into a deep sleep.

On waking, he found himself on the green knoll whence he had first seen the old man of the glen. He rubbed his eyes—it was a bright sunny morning. The birds were hopping and twittering among the bushes, and the eagle was wheeling aloft, and breasting the pure mountain breeze. "Surely," thought Rip, "I have not slept here all night." He recalled the occurrences before he fell asleep. The strange man with a keg of liquor—the mountain ravine—the wild retreat among the rocks—the woebegone party at ninepins—the flagon—"Oh! that flagon! that wicked flagon!" thought Rip,—"what excuse shall I make to Dame Van Winkle?"

He looked round for his gun, but in place of the clean, well-oiled fowling-piece, he found an old firelock lying by him, the barrel incrusted with rust, the lock falling off, and the stock worm-eaten. He now suspected that the grave roisterers of the mountain had put a trick upon him, and, having dosed him with liquor, had robbed him of his gun. Wolf, too, had disappeared, but he might have strayed away after a squirrel or partridge. He whistled after him, and shouted his name, but all in vain; the echoes repeated his whistle and shout, but no dog was to be seen.

He determined to revisit the scene of the last evening's gambol, and if he met with any of the party, to demand his dog and gun.

As he rose to walk, he found himself stiff in the joints, and wanting in his usual activity. "These mountain beds do not agree with me," thought Rip, "and if this frolic should lay me up with a fit of the rheumatism, I shall have a blessed time with Dame Van Winkle." With some difficulty he got down into the glen: he found the gully which he and his companion had ascended the preceding evening; but to his astonishment a mountain stream was now foaming down it, leaping from rock to rock, and filling the glen with babbling murmurs. He, however, made shift to scramble up its sides, working his toilsome way through thickets of birch, sassafras, and witch-hazel, and sometimes tripped up or entangled by the wild grape-vines that twisted their coils or tendrils from tree to tree, and spread a kind of network in his path.

At length he reached to where the ravine had opened through the cliffs to the amphitheatre; but no traces of such opening remained. The rocks presented a high, impenetrable wall, over which the torrent came tumbling in a sheet of feathery foam, and fell into a broad, deep basin, black from the shadows of the surrounding forest. Here, then, poor Rip was brought to a stand. He again called and whistled after his dog: he was only answered by the cawing of a flock of idle crows, sporting high in air about a dry tree that overhung a sunny precipice; and who, secure in their elevation, seemed to look down and scoff at the poor man's perplexities. What was to be done? the morning was passing away, and Rip felt famished for want of his breakfast. He grieved to give up his dog and gun; he dreaded to meet his wife; but it would not do to starve among the mountains. He shook his head, shouldered the rusty firelock, and, with a heart full of trouble and anxiety, turned his steps homeward.

As he approached the village he met a number of people, but none whom he knew, which somewhat surprised him, for he had thought himself acquainted with every one in the country round. Their dress, too, was of a different fashion from that to which he was accustomed. They all stared at him with equal marks of surprise, and whenever they cast their eyes upon him, invariably stroked their chins. The constant recurrence of this gesture induced Rip, involuntarily, to do the same, when, to his astonishment, he found his beard had grown a foot long!

He had now entered the skirts of the village. A troop of strange children ran at his heels, hooting after him, and pointing at his gray beard. The dogs, too, not one of which he recognized for an old acquaintance, barked at him as he passed. The very village was altered; it was larger and more populous. There were rows of houses which he had never seen before, and those which had been his familiar haunts had disappeared. Strange names were over the doors—strange faces at the windows—everything was strange. His mind now misgave him; he began to doubt whether both he and the world around him were not bewitched. Surely this was his native village, which he had left but the day before. There stood the Kaatskill mountains—there ran the silver Hudson at a distance—there was every hill and dale precisely as it had always been. Rip was sorely perplexed. "That flagon last night," thought he, "has addled my poor head sadly!"

It was with some difficulty that he found the way to his own house, which he approached with silent awe, expecting every moment to hear the shrill voice of Dame Van Winkle. He found the house gone to decay—the roof fallen in, the windows shattered, and the doors off the hinges. A half-starved dog that looked like Wolf was skulking about it. Rip called him by name, but the cur snarled, showed his teeth, and passed on. This was an unkind cut indeed. "My very dog," sighed poor Rip, "has forgotten me!"

He entered the house, which, to tell the truth, Dame Van Winkle had always kept in neat order. It was empty, forlorn, and apparently abandoned. This desolateness overcame all his conjugal fears—he called loudly for his wife and children—the lonely chambers rang for a moment with his voice, and then all again was silence.

He now hurried forth, and hastened to his old resort, the village inn—but it too was gone. A large rickety wooden building stood in its place with great gaping windows, some of them broken and mended with old hats and petticoats, and over the door was painted, "The Union Hotel, by Jonathan Doolittle." Instead of the great tree that used to shelter the quiet little Dutch inn of yore, there now was reared a tall naked pole, with something on the top that looked like a red nightcap, and from it was

fluttering a flag, on which was a singular assemblage of stars and stripes ;—all this was strange and incomprehensible. He recognized on the sign, however, the ruby face of King George, under which he had smoked so many a peaceful pipe ; but even this was singularly metamorphosed. The red coat was changed for one of blue and buff, a sword was held in the hand instead of a sceptre, the head was decorated with a cocked hat, and underneath was painted in large characters, GENERAL WASHINGTON.

There was, as usual, a crowd of folk about the door, but none that Rip recollects. The very character of the people seemed changed. There was a busy, bustling, disputatious tone about it instead of the accustomed phlegm and drowsy tranquillity. He looked in vain for the sage Nicholas Vedder, with his broad face, double chin, and fair long pipe, uttering clouds of tobacco smoke instead of idle speeches ; or Van Bummel, the schoolmaster, doling forth the contents of an ancient newspaper. In place of these, a lean, bilious-looking fellow, with his pockets full of hand-bills, was haranguing vehemently about rights of citizens—elections — members of congress — liberty — Bunker's Hill — heroes of seventy-six — and other words, which were a perfect Babylonish jargon to the bewildered Van Winkle.

The appearance of Rip, with his long, grizzled beard, his rusty fowling-piece, his uncouth dress, and an army of women and children at his heels, soon attracted the attention of the ~~tavern~~ politicians. They crowded around him, eyeing him from head to foot with great curiosity. The orator hustled up to him, and, drawing him partly aside, inquired “on which side he voted?” Rip stared in vacant stupidity. Another short but busy little fellow pulled him by the arm, and, rising on tiptoe, inquired in his ear, “Whether he was a Federal or a Democrat?” Rip was equally at a loss to comprehend the question ; when a knowing, self-important old gentleman, in a sharp cocked hat, made his way through the crowd, putting them to the right and left with his elbows as he passed, and planting himself before Van Winkle, with one arm akimbo, the other resting on his cane, his keen eyes and sharp hat penetrating, as it were, into his very soul, demanded in an austere tone, “What brought him to the election with a gun on his shoulder, and a mob at his heels ; and whether

he meant to breed a riot in the village?"—"Alas! gentlemen," cried Rip, somewhat dismayed, "I am a poor, quiet man, a native of the place, and a loyal subject of the King, God bless him!"

Here a general shout burst from the by-standers—"A tory! a tory! a spy! a refugee! hustle him! away with him!" It was with great difficulty that the self-important man in the cocked hat restored order; and, having assumed a tenfold austerity of brow, demanded again of the unknown culprit, what he came there for, and whom he was seeking? The poor man humbly assured him that he meant no harm, but merely came there in search of some of his neighbors, who used to keep about the tavern.

"Well—who are they?—name them."

Rip bethought himself a moment, and inquired, "Where's Nicholas Vedder?"

There was silence for a little while, when an old man replied, in a thin piping voice, "Nicholas Vedder! why, he is dead and gone these eighteen years! There was a wooden tombstone in the churchyard that used to tell all about him, but that's rotten and gone too."

"Where's Brom Dutcher?"

"Oh, he went off to the army in the beginning of the war; some say he was killed at the storming of Stony Point—others say he was drowned in a squall at the foot of Antony's Nose. I don't know—he never came back again."

"Where's Van Brummel, the schoolmaster?"

"He went off to the wars, too, was a great militia general, and is now in Congress."

Rip's heart died away at hearing of these sad changes in his home and friends, and finding himself thus alone in the world. Every answer puzzled him, too, by treating of such enormous lapses of time, and of matters which he could not understand: war—congress—Stony Point;—he had no courage to ask after any more friends, but cried out in despair: "Does nobody here know Rip Van Winkle?"

"Oh, Rip Van Winkle!" exclaimed two or three; "oh, to be sure! that's Rip Van Winkle yonder, leaning against the tree."

Rip looked and beheld a precise counterpart of himself as he went up the mountain; apparently as lazy, and certainly as ragged. The poor fellow was now completely confounded. He

doubted his own identity, and whether he was himself or another man. In the midst of his bewilderment, the man in the cocked hat demanded who he was, and what was his name.

"God knows," exclaimed he, at his wit's end; "I'm not myself—I'm somebody else—that's me yonder—no—that's somebody else got into my shoes—I was myself last night, but I fell asleep on the mountain, and they've changed my gun, and everything's changed, and I'm changed, and I can't tell what's my name, or who I am!"

The by-standers began now to look at each other, nod, wink significantly, and tap their fingers against their foreheads. There was a whisper, also, about securing the gun, and keeping the old fellow from doing mischief, at the very suggestion of which the self-important man in the cocked hat retired with some precipitation. At this critical moment a fresh, comely woman pressed through the throng to get a peep at the gray-bearded man. She had a chubby child in her arms, which, frightened at his looks, began to cry. "Hush, Rip," cried she, "hush, you little fool; the old man won't hurt you." The name of the child, the air of the mother, the tone of her voice, all awakened a train of recollections in his mind. "What is your name, my good woman?" asked he.

"Judith Gardenier."

"And your father's name?"

"Ah, poor man, Rip Van Winkle was his name, but it's twenty years since he went away from home with his gun, and never has been heard of since,—his dog came home without him; but whether he shot himself, or was carried away by the Indians, nobody can tell. I was then but a little girl."

Rip had but one question more to ask; but he put it with a faltering voice:

"Where's your mother?"

"Oh, she too had died but a short time since; she broke a blood-vessel in a fit of passion at a New England peddler."

There was a drop of comfort, at least, in this intelligence. The honest man could contain himself no longer. He caught his daughter and her child in his arms. "I am your father!" cried he—"Young Rip Van Winkle once—old Rip Van Winkle now! Does nobody know poor Rip Van Winkle?"

All stood amazed, until an old woman, tottering out from among the crowd, put her hand to her brow, and peering under it in his face for a moment, exclaimed, "Sure enough! it is Rip Van Winkle—it is himself! Welcome home again, old neighbor! Why, where have you been these twenty long years?"

Rip's story was soon told, for the whole twenty years had been to him but as one night. The neighbors stared when they heard it; some were seen to wink at each other, and put their tongues in their cheeks: and the self-important man in the cocked hat, who, when the alarm was over, had returned to the field, screwed down the corners of his mouth, and shook his head—upon which there was a general shaking of the head throughout the assemblage.

It was determined, however, to take the opinion of old Peter Vanderdonk, who was seen slowly advancing up the road. He was a descendant of the historian of that name, who wrote one of the earliest accounts of the province. Peter was the most ancient inhabitant of the village, and well versed in all the wonderful events and traditions of the neighborhood. He recollect ed Rip at once, and corroborated his story in the most satisfactory manner. He assured the company that it was a fact, handed down from his ancestor the historian, that the Kaatskill mountains had always been haunted by strange beings; that it was affirmed that the great Hendrick Hudson, the first discoverer of the river and the country, kept a kind of vigil there every twenty years, with his crew of the Half-moon, being permitted in this way to revisit the scenes of his enterprise, and keep a guardian eye upon the river and the great city called by his name; that his father had once seen them in their old Dutch dresses playing at ninepins in a hollow of the mountain; and that he himself had heard, one summer afternoon, the sound of their balls, like distant peals of thunder.

To make a long story short, the company broke up and returned to the more important concerns of the election. Rip's daughter took him home to live with her; she had a snug, well-furnished house, and a stout, cheery farmer for a husband, whom Rip recollect ed for one of the urchins that used to climb upon his back. As to Rip's son and heir, who was the ditto of himself, seen leaning against the tree, he was employed to work on the farm; but evinced an hereditary disposition to attend to anything else but his business.

Rip now resumed his old walks and habits; he soon found many of his former cronies; though all rather the worse for the wear and tear of time; and preferred making friends among the rising generation, with whom he soon grew into great favor.

Having nothing to do at home, and being arrived at that happy age when a man can be idle with impunity, he took his place once more on the bench at the inn door, and was reverenced as one of the patriarchs of the village, and a chronicle of the old times "before the war." It was some time before he could get into the regular track of gossip, or could be made to comprehend the strange events that had taken place during his torpor. How that there had been a revolutionary war,—that the country had thrown off the yoke of old England—and that, instead of being a subject of his Majesty George the Third, he was now a free citizen of the United States. Rip, in fact, was no politician; the change of states and empires made but little impression on him; but there was one species of despotism under which he had long groaned, and that was—petticoat government. Happily that was at an end; he had got his neck out of the yoke of matrimony, and could go in and out whenever he pleased, without dreading the tyranny of Dame Van Winkle. Whenever her name was mentioned, however, he shook his head, shrugged his shoulders, and cast up his eyes; which might pass either for an expression of resignation to his fate, or joy at his deliverance.

He used to tell his story to every stranger that arrived at Mr. Doolittle's hotel. He was observed, at first, to vary on some points every time he told it, which was, doubtless, owing to his having so recently awakened. It at last settled down precisely to the tale I have related, and not a man, woman, or child in the neighborhood but knew it by heart. Some always pretended to doubt the reality of it, and insisted that Rip had been out of his head, and that this was one point on which he always remained flighty. The old Dutch inhabitants, however, almost universally gave it full credit. Even to this day they never hear a thunder-storm of a summer afternoon about the Kaatskill, but they say Hendrick Hudson and his crew are at their game of ninepins; and it is a common wish of all hen-pecked husbands in the neighborhood, when life hangs heavy on their hands, that they might have a quieting draught out of Rip Van Winkle's flagon.

LEGEND OF THE ROSE OF THE ALHAMBRA

FOR some time after the surrender of Granada by the Moors, that delightful city was a frequent and favorite residence of the Spanish sovereigns, until they were frightened away by successive shocks of earthquakes, which toppled down various houses, and made the old Moslem towers rock to their foundation.

Many, many years then rolled away, during which Granada was rarely honored by a royal guest. The palaces of the nobility remained silent and shut up; and the Alhambra, like a slighted beauty, sat in mournful desolation, among her neglected gardens. The tower of the Infantas, once the residence of the three beautiful Moorish princesses, partook of the general desolation; the spider spun her web athwart the gilded vault, and bats and owls nestled in those chambers that had been graced by the presence of Zayda, Zorayda and Zorahayda. The neglect of this tower may partly have been owing to some superstitious notions of the neighbors. It was rumored that the spirit of the youthful Zorahayda, who had perished in that tower, was often seen by moonlight seated beside the fountain in the hall, or moaning about the battlements, and that the notes of her silver lute would be heard at midnight by wayfarers passing along the glen.

At length the city of Granada was once more welcomed by the royal presence. All the world knows that Philip V. was the first Bourbon that swayed the Spanish scepter. All the world knows that he married, in second nuptials, Elizabetta or Isabella (for they are the same), the beautiful princess of Parma; and all the world knows that by this chain of contingencies a French prince and an Italian princess were seated together on the Spanish throne. For a visit of this illustrious pair, the Alhambra was repaired and fitted up with all possible expedition. The arrival of the court changed the whole aspect of the lately deserted palace. The clangor of drum and trumpet, the tramp of steed about the avenues and outer court, the glitter of arms and display of banners about barbican and battlement, recalled the ancient and warlike glories of the fortress. A softer spirit, however, reigned within the royal palace. There was the rustling of robes and the cautious tread and murmuring voice of reverential courtiers about the ante-chambers; a loitering of pages and maids of honor about the gardens, and the sound of music stealing from open casements.

Among those who attended in the train of the monarchs was a favorite page of the queen, named Ruyz de Alarcón. To say that he was a favorite page of the queen was at once to speak his eulogium, for every one in the suite of the stately Elizabetta was chosen for grace, and beauty, and accomplishments. He was just turned of eighteen, light and lithe of form, and graceful as a young Antinous. To the queen he was all deference and respect, yet he was at heart a roguish stripling, petted and spoiled by the ladies about the court and experienced in the ways of women far beyond his years.

This loitering page was one morning rambling about the groves of the Generalife, which overlook the grounds of the Alhambra. He had taken with him for his amusement a favorite ger-falcon of the queen. In the course of his rambles, seeing a bird rising from a thicket, he unhooded the hawk and let him fly. The falcon towered high in the air, made a swoop at his quarry, but missing it, soared away, regardless of the calls of the page. The latter followed the truant bird with his eye, in its capricious flight, until he saw it alight upon the battlements of a remote and lonely tower, in the outer wall of the Alhambra, built on the edge of a ravine that separated the royal fortress from the ground of the Generalife. It was in fact the "Tower of the Princesses."

The page descended into the ravine and approached the tower, but it had no entrance from the glen, and its lofty hight rendered any attempt to scale it fruitless. Seeking one of the gates of the fortress, therefore, he made a wide circuit to that side of the tower facing within the walls.

A small garden, enclosed by a trellis-work of reeds overhung with myrtle, lay before the tower. Opening a wicket, the page passed between beds of flowers and thickets of roses to the door. It was closed and bolted. A crevice in the door gave him a peep into the interior. There was a small Moorish hall with fretted walls, light marble columns, and an alabaster fountain surrounded with flowers. In the center hung a gilt cage containing a singing-bird; beneath it, on a chair, lay a tortoise-shell cat among reels of silk and other articles of female labor, and a guitar decorated with ribbons leaned against the fountain.

Ruyz de Alarcón was struck with these traces of female taste and elegance in a lonely and, as he had supposed, deserted tower. They reminded him of the tales of enchanted halls current in

the Alhambra; and the tortoise-shell cat might be some spell-bound princess.

He knocked gently at the door. A beautiful face peeped out from a little window above, but was instantly withdrawn. He waited, expecting that the door would be opened, but he waited in vain; no footstep was to be heard within—all was silent. Had his senses deceived him, or was this beautiful apparition the fairy of the tower? He knocked again, and more loudly. After a little while the beaming face once more peeped forth; it was that of a blooming damsel of fifteen.

The page immediately doffed his plumed bonnet, and entreated in the most courteous accents to be permitted to ascend the tower in pursuit of his falcon.

"I dare not open the door, Señor," replied the little damsel, blushing, "my aunt has forbidden it."

"I do beseech you, fair maid—it is the favorite falcon of the queen. I dare not return to the palace without it."

"Are you then one of the cavaliers of the court?"

"I am, fair maid; but I shall lose the queen's favor and my place, if I lose this hawk."

"Santa Maria! It is against you cavaliers of the court my aunt has charged me especially to bar the door."

"Against wicked cavaliers doubtless, but I am none of these, but a simple harmless page, who will be ruined and undone if you deny me this small request."

The heart of the little damsel was touched by the distress of the page. It was a thousand pities he should be ruined for the want of so trifling a boon. Surely too he could not be one of those dangerous beings whom her aunt had described as a species of cannibal, ever on the prowl to make prey of thoughtless damsels; he was gentle and modest, and stood so entreatingly with cap in hand, and looked so charming.

The sly page saw that the garrison began to waver, and redoubled his entreaties in such moving terms that it was not in the nature of mortal maiden to deny him; so the blushing little warden of the tower descended, and opened the door with a trembling hand, and if the page had been charmed by a mere glimpse of her countenance from the window, he was ravished by the full-length portrait now revealed to him.

Her Andalusian *bodice* and trim *basquiña* set off the round but

delicate symmetry of her form, which was as yet scarce verging into womanhood. Her glossy hair was parted on her forehead with scrupulous exactness, and decorated with a fresh-plucked rose, according to the universal custom of the country. It is true her complexion was tinged by the ardor of a southern sun, but it served to give richness to the mantling bloom of her cheek, and to highten the lustre of her melting eyes.

Ruyz de Alarcón beheld this all with a single glance, for it became him not to tarry; he merely murmured his acknowledgments, and then bounded lightly up the spiral staircase in quest of his falcon.

He soon returned with the truant bird upon his fist. The damsel, in the meantime, had seated herself by the fountain in the hall, and was winding silk; but in her agitation she let fall the reel upon the pavement. The page sprang and picked it up, then dropping gracefully on one knee presented it to her; but, seizing the hand extended to receive it, imprinted on it a kiss more fervent and devout than he had ever imprinted on the fair hand of his sovereign.

"Ave Maria, Señor!" exclaimed the damsel, blushing still deeper with confusion and surprize, for never before had she received such a salutation.

The modest page made a thousand apologies, assuring her it was the way at court, of expressing the most profound homage and respect.

Her anger, if anger she felt, was easily pacified, but her agitation and embarrassment continued, and she sat blushing deeper and deeper, with her eyes cast down upon her work, entangling the silk which she attempted to wind.

The cunning page saw the confusion in the opposite camp, and would fain have profited by it, but the fine speeches he would have uttered died upon his lips; his attempts at gallantry were awkward and ineffectual; and to his surprize, the adroit page, who had figured with such grace and effrontery among the most knowing and experienced ladies of the court, found himself awed and abashed in the presence of a simple damsel of fifteen.

In fact, the artless maiden, in her own modesty and innocence, had guardians more effectual than the bolts and bars prescribed by her vigilant aunt. Still, where is the female bosom proof against the first whisperings of love? The little damsel, with all

her artlessness, instinctively comprehended all that the faltering tongue of the page failed to express, and her heart was fluttered at beholding, for the first time, a lover at her feet—and such a lover!

The diffidence of the page, tho genuine, was shortlived, and he was recovering his usual ease and confidence, when a shrill voice was heard at a distance.

"My aunt is returning from mass," cried the damsel in affright; "I pray you, Señor, depart."

"Not until you grant me that rose from your hair as a remembrance."

She hastily untwisted the rose from her raven locks. "Take it," cried she, agitated and blushing, "but pray begone."

The page took the rose, and at the same time covered with kisses the fair hand that gave it. Then, placing the flower in his bonnet, and taking the falcon upon his fist, he bounded off through the garden, bearing away with him the heart of the gentle Jacinta.

When the vigilant aunt arrived at the tower, she remarked the agitation of her niece, and an air of confusion in the hall; but a word of explanation sufficed. "A ger-falcon had pursued his prey into the hall."

"Mercy on us! to think of a falcon flying into the tower. Did ever one hear of so saucy a hawk? Why, the very bird in the cage is not safe!"

The vigilant Fredegonda was one of the most wary of ancient spinsters. She had a becoming terror and distrust of what she denominated "the opposite sex," which had gradually increased through a long life of celibacy. Not that the good lady had ever suffered from their wiles, nature having set up a safeguard in her face that forbade all trespass upon her premises; but ladies who have least cause to fear for themselves are most ready to keep a watch over their more tempting neighbors.

The niece was the orphan of an officer who had fallen in the wars. She had been educated in a convent, and had recently been transferred from her sacred asylum to the immediate guardianship of her aunt, under whose overshadowing care she vegetated in obscurity, like an opening rose blooming beneath a brier. Nor indeed is this comparison entirely accidental; for, to tell the truth, her fresh and dawning beauty had caught the public eye,

even in her seclusion, and, with that poetical turn common to the people of Andalusia, the peasantry of the neighborhood had given her the appellation of "the Rose of the Alhambra."

The wary aunt continued to keep a faithful watch over her tempting little niece as long as the court continued at Granada, and flattered herself that her vigilance had been successful. It is true, the good lady was now and then discomposed by the tinkling of guitars and chanting of love ditties from the moonlit groves beneath the tower; but she would exhort her niece to shut her ears against such idle minstrelsy, assuring her that it was one of the arts of the opposite sex, by which simple maids were often lured to their undoing. Alas! what chance with a simple maid has a dry lecture against a moonlight serenade?

At length king Philip cut short his sojourn at Granada, and suddenly departed with all his train. The vigilant Fredegonda watched the royal pageant as it issued forth from the Gate of Justice, and descended the great avenue leading to the city. When the last banner disappeared from her sight, she returned exulting to her tower, for all her cares were over. To her surprise, a light Arabian steed pawed the ground at the wicket-gate of the garden:—to her horror, she saw through the thickets of roses a youth, in gaily-embroidered dress, at the feet of her niece. At the sound of her footsteps he gave a tender adieu, bounded lightly over the barrier of reeds and myrtles, sprang upon his horse, and was out of sight in an instant.

The tender Jacinta, in the agony of her grief, lost all thought of her aunt's displeasure. Throwing herself into her arms, she broke forth into sobs and tears.

"Ay de mi!" cried she; "he's gone!—he's gone!—he's gone! and I shall never see him more!"

"Gone!— who is gone?—what youth is that I saw at your feet?"

"A queen's page, aunt, who came to bid me farewell."

"A queen's page, child!" echoed the vigilant Fredegonda, faintly, "and when did you become acquainted with the queen's page?"

"The morning that the ger-falcon came into the tower. It was the queen's ger-falcon, and he came in pursuit of it."

"Ah, silly, silly girl! know that there are no ger-falcons half so dangerous as these young prankling pages, and it is precisely

such simple birds as thee that they pounce upon."

The aunt was at first indignant at learning that in despite of her boasted vigilance, a tender intercourse had been carried on by the youthful lovers, almost beneath her eye; but when she found that her simple-hearted niece, though thus exposed, without the protection of bolt or bar, to all the machinations of the opposite sex, had come forth unsinged from the fiery ordeal, she consoled herself with the persuasion that it was owing to the chaste and cautious maxims in which she had, as it were, steeped her to the very lips.

While the aunt laid this soothing unction to her pride, the niece treasured up the oft-repeated vows of fidelity of the page. But what is the love of restless, roving man? A vagrant stream that dallies for a time with each flower upon its bank, then passes on, and leaves them all in tears.

Days, weeks, months elapsed, and nothing more was heard of the page. The pomegranate ripened, the vine yielded up its fruit, the autumnal rains descended in torrents from the mountains; the Sierra Nevada became covered with a snowy mantle, and wintry blasts howled through the halls of the Alhambra—still he came not. The winter passed away. Again the genial spring burst forth with song and blossom and balmy zephyr; the snows melted from the mountains, until none remained but on the lofty summit of Nevada, glistening through the summer air. Still nothing was heard of the forgetful page.

In the meantime, the poor little Jacinta grew pale and thoughtful. Her former occupations and amusements were abandoned, her silk lay entangled, her guitar unstrung, her flowers were neglected, the notes of her bird unheeded, and her eyes, once so bright, were dimmed with secret weeping. If any solitude could be devised to foster the passion of a love-lorn damsel, it would be such a place as the Alhambra, where everything seems disposed to produce tender and romantic reveries. It is a very paradise for lovers: how hard then to be alone in such a paradise—and not merely alone, but forsaken!

"Alas, silly child!" would the staid and immaculate Fredegonda say, when she found her niece in one of her desponding moods—"did I not warn thee against the wiles and deceptions of these men? What couldst thou expect, too, from one of a haughty and aspiring family—thou an orphan, the descendant of a fallen

and impoverished line? Be assured, if the youth were true, his father, who is one of the proudest nobles about the court, would prohibit his union with one so humble and portionless as thou. Pluck up thy resolution, therefore, and drive these idle notions from thy mind."

The words of the immaculate Fredegonda only served to increase the melancholy of her niece, but she sought to indulge it in private. At a late hour one midsummer night, after her aunt had retired to rest, she remained alone in the hall of the tower, seated beside the alabaster fountain. It was here that the faithless page had first knelt and kissed her hand; it was here that he had often vowed eternal fidelity. The poor little damsel's heart was overladen with sad and tender recollections, her tears began to flow, and slowly fell drop by drop into the fountain. By degrees the crystal water became agitated, and—bubble—bubble—bubble—boiled up and was tossed about, until a female figure, richly clad in Moorish robes, slowly rose to view.

Jacinta was so frightened that she fled from the hall, and did not venture to return. The next morning she related what she had seen to her aunt, but the good lady treated it as a phantasy of her troubled mind, or supposed she had fallen asleep and dreamt beside the fountain. "Thou hast been thinking of the story of the three Moorish princesses that once inhabited this tower," continued she, "and it has entered into thy dreams."

"What story, aunt? I know nothing of it."

"Thou hast certainly heard of the three princesses, Zayda, Zorayda, and Zorahayda, who were confined in this tower by the king their father, and agreed to fly with three Christian cavaliers. The first two accomplished their escape, but the third failed in her resolution, and, it is said, died in this tower."

"I now recollect to have heard it," said Jacinta, "and to have wept over the fate of the gentle Zorahayda."

"Thou mayest well weep over her fate," continued the aunt, "for the lover of Zorahayda was thy ancestor. He long bemoaned his Moorish love; but time cured him of his grief, and he married a Spanish lady, from whom thou art descended."

Jacinta ruminated upon these words. "That what I have seen is no phantasy of the brain," said she to herself, "I am confident. If indeed it be the spirit of the gentle Zorahayda, which I have heard lingers about this tower, of what should I be afraid? I'll

watch by the fountain tonight—perhaps this visit will be repeated."

Towards midnight, when every thing was quiet, she again took her seat in the hall. As the bell in the distant watchtower of the Alhambra struck the midnight hour, the fountain was again agitated; and bubble—bubble—bubble—it tossed about the waters until the Moorish female again rose to view. She was young and beautiful; her dress was rich with jewels, and in her hand she held a silver lute. Jacinta trembled and was faint, but was reassured by the soft and plaintive voice of the apparition, and the sweet expression of her pale, melancholy countenance.

"Daughter of mortality," said she, "what aileth thee? Why do thy tears trouble my fountain, and thy sighs and plaints disturb the quiet watches of the night?"

"I weep because of the faithlessness of man, and I bemoan my solitary and forsaken state."

"Take comfort; thy sorrows may yet have an end. Thou behest a Moorish princess, who, like thee, was unhappy in her love. A Christian knight, thy ancestor, won my heart, and would have borne me to his native land and to the bosom of his church. I was a convert in my heart, but I lacked courage equal to my faith, and lingered till too late. For this the evil genii are permitted to have power over me, and I remain enchanted in this tower until some pure Christian will deign to break the magic spell. Wilt thou undertake the task?"

"I will," replied the damsel, trembling.

"Come hither then, and fear not; dip thy hand in the fountain, sprinkle the water over me, and baptize me after the manner of thy faith; so shall the enchantment be dispelled, and my troubled spirit have repose."

The damsel advanced with faltering steps, dipped her hand in the fountain, collected water in the palm, and sprinkled it over the pale face of the phantom.

The latter smiled with ineffable benignity. She dropped her silver lute at the feet of Jacinta, crossed her white arms upon her bosom, and melted from sight, so that it seemed merely as if a shower of dewdrops had fallen into the fountain.

Jacinta retired from the hall filled with awe and wonder. She scarcely closed her eyes that night; but when she awoke at day-break out of a troubled slumber, the whole appeared to her like

a distempered dream. On descending into the hall, however, the truth of the vision was established, for, beside the fountain, she beheld the silver lute glittering in the morning sunshine.

She hastened to her aunt, to relate all that had befallen her, and called her to behold the lute as a testimonial of the reality of her story. If the good lady had any lingering doubts, they were removed when Jacinta touched the instrument, for she drew forth such ravishing tones as to thaw even the frigid bosom of the immaculate Fredegonda, that region of eternal winter, into a genial flow. Nothing but supernatural melody could have produced such an effect.

The extraordinary power of the lute became every day more and more apparent. The wayfarer passing by the tower was detained, and, as it were, spellbound, in breathless ecstasy. The very birds gathered in the neighboring trees, and hushing their own strains, listened in charmed silence.

Rumor soon spread the news abroad. The inhabitants of Granada thronged to the Alhambra to catch a few notes of the transcendent music floated about the tower of Las Infantas.

The lovely little minstrel was at length drawn forth from her retreat. The rich and powerful of the land contended who should entertain and do honor to her; or rather, who should secure the charms of her lute to draw fashionable throngs to their saloons. Wherever she went her vigilant aunt kept a dragon watch at her elbow, awing the throngs of impassioned admirers, who hung in raptures on her strains. The reports of her wonderful powers spread from city to city. Malaga, Seville, Cordova, all became successively mad on the theme; nothing was talked of throughout Andalusia but the beautiful minstrel of the Alhambra. How could it be otherwise among a people so musical and gallant as the Andalusians, when the lute was magical in its powers, and the minstrel inspired by love!

While all Andalusia was thus music mad, a different mood prevailed at the court of Spain. Philip V., as is well known, was a miserable hypochondriac, and subject to all kinds of fancies. Sometimes he would keep to his bed for weeks together, groaning under imaginary complaints. At other times he would insist upon abdicating his throne, to the great annoyance of his royal spouse, who had a strong relish for the splendor of a court and the glories of a crown, and guided the

sceptre of her imbecile lord with an expert and steady hand.

Nothing was found to be so efficacious in dispelling the royal megrims as the power of music; the queen took care, therefore, to have the best performers, both vocal and instrumental, at hand, and retained the famous Italian singer Farinelli about the court as a kind of royal physician.

At the moment we treat of, however, a freak had come over the mind of this sapient and illustrious Bourbon that surpassed all former vagaries. After a long spell of imaginary illness, which set all the strains of Farinelli and the consultations of a whole orchestra of court fiddlers at defiance, the monarch fairly, in idea, gave up the ghost, and considered himself absolutely dead.

This would have been harmless enough, and even convenient both to his queen and his courtiers, had he been content to remain in the quietude befitting a dead man; but to their annoyance he insisted upon having the funeral ceremonies performed over him, and, to their inexpressible perplexity, began to grow impatient, and to revile bitterly at them for negligence and disrespect, in leaving him unburied. What was to be done? To disobey the king's positive commands was monstrous in the eyes of the obsequious courtiers of a punctilious court—but to obey him, and bury him alive would be downright regicide!

In the midst of this fearful dilemma a rumor reached the court, of the female minstrel who was turning the brains of all Andalusia. The queen dispatched missions in all haste to summon her to St. Ildefonso, where the court at that time resided.

Within a few days, as the queen with her maids of honor was walking in those stately gardens, intended, with their avenues and terraces and fountains, to eclipse the glories of Versailles, the far-famed minstrel was conducted into her presence. The imperial Elizabeth gazed with surprise at the youthful and unpretending appearance of the little being that had set the world madding. She was in her picturesque Andalusian dress, her silver lute in hand, and stood with modest and downcast eyes, but with a simplicity and freshness of beauty that still bespoke her "the Rose of the Alhambra."

As usual she was accompanied by the ever-vigilant Frederonda, who gave the whole history of her parentage and descent to the inquiring queen. If the stately Elizabetta had been interested by the appearance of Jacinta, she was still more pleased

when she learnt that she was of a meritorious though impoverished line, and that her father had bravely fallen in the service of the crown. "If thy powers equal thy renown," said she, "and thou canst cast forth this evil spirit that possesses thy sovereign, thy fortunes shall henceforth be my care, and honors and wealth attend thee."

Impatient to make trial of her skill, she led the way at once to the apartment of the moody monarch.

Jacinta followed with downcast eyes through files of guards and crowds of courtiers. They arrived at length at a great chamber hung with black. The windows were closed to exclude the light of day: a number of yellow wax tapers in silver sconces, diffused a lugubrious light, and dimly revealed the figures of mutes in mourning dresses, and courtiers who glided about with noiseless step and woebegone visage. In the midst of a funeral bed or bier, his hands folded on his breast, and the tip of his nose just visible, lay extended this would-be-buried monarch.

The queen entered the chamber in silence, and pointing to a footstool in an obscure corner, beckoned to Jacinta to sit down and commence.

At first she touched her lute with a faltering hand, but gathering confidence and animation as she proceeded, drew forth such soft aerial harmony, that all present could scarce believe it mortal. As to the monarch, who had already considered himself in the world of spirits, he set it down for some angelic melody or the music of the spheres. By degrees the theme was varied, and the voice of the minstrel accompanied the instrument. She poured forth one of the legendary ballads treating of the ancient glories of the Alhambra and the achievements of the Moors. Her whole soul entered into the theme, for with the recollections of the Alhambra was associated the story of her love. The funeral chamber resounded with the animating strain. It entered into the gloomy heart of the monarch. He raised his head and gazed around: he sat up in his couch, his eye began to kindle—at length, leaping upon the floor, he called for sword and buckler.

The triumph of music, or rather of the enchanted lute, was complete; the demon of melancholy was cast forth; and, as it were, a dead man brought to life. The windows of the apartment were thrown open; the glorious effulgence of Spanish sun-

shine burst into the late lugubrious chamber; all eyes sought the lovely enchantress, but the lute had fallen from her hand, she had sunk upon the earth, and the next moment was clasped to the bosom of Ruyz de Alarcón.

The nuptials of the happy couple were celebrated soon afterwards with great splendor, and the Rose of the Alhambra became the ornament and delight of the court. "But hold—not so fast"—I hear the reader exclaim, "this is jumping to the end of a story at a furious rate. First let us know how Ruyz de Alarcón managed to account to Jacinta for his long neglect." Nothing more easy; the venerable, time-honored excuse, the opposition to his wishes by a proud, pragmatical old father; besides, young people, who really like one another, soon come to an amicable understanding, and bury all past grievances when once they meet.

But how was the proud pragmatical old father reconciled to the match?

Oh! as to that, his scruples were easily overcome by a word or two from the queen; especially as dignities and rewards were showered upon the blooming favorite of royalty. Besides, the lute of Jacinta, you know, possessed a magic power, and could control the most stubborn head and hardest breast.

And what became of the enchanted lute?

O that is the most curious matter of all, and plainly proves the truth of the whole story. That lute remained for some time in the family, but was purloined and carried off, as was supposed, by the great singer Farinelli, in pure jealousy. At his death it passed into other hands in Italy, who were ignorant of its mystic powers, and melting down the silver, transferred the strings to an old Cremona fiddle. The strings still retain something of their magic virtues. A word in the reader's ear, but let it go no further—that fiddle is now bewitching the whole world—it is the fiddle of Paganini.

THOMAS JEFFERSON

1743-1826

The third president of the United States and the author of the Declaration of Independence, although primarily a man of action, yet wielded a forceful and effective pen. The Declaration of Independence, indeed, ranks high as literature. The state papers and correspondence of Jefferson fill many volumes, and the average of their excellence is perhaps higher than in the case of any other president.

FIRST INAUGURAL ADDRESS

FRIENDS and Fellow-Citizens: Called upon to undertake the duties of the first executive office of our country, I avail myself of the presence of that portion of my fellow-citizens which is here assembled, to express my grateful thanks for the favor with which they have been pleased to look towards me, to declare a sincere consciousness, that the task is above my talents, and that I approach it with those anxious and awful presentiments, which the greatness of the charge, and the weakness of my powers, so justly inspire. A rising nation, spread over a wide and fruitful land, traversing all the seas with the rich productions of their industry, engaged in commerce with nations who feel power and forget right, advancing rapidly to destinies beyond the reach of mortal eye; when I contemplate these transcendent objects, and see the honor, the happiness, and the hopes of this beloved country committed to the issue and the auspices of this day, I shrink from the contemplation, and humble myself before the magnitude of the undertaking. Utterly, indeed, should I despair, did not the presence of many, whom I here see, remind me, that, in the other high authorities provided by our Constitution, I shall find resources of wisdom, of virtue, and of zeal, on which to rely under all difficulties. To you, then, gentlemen, who are charged with the sovereign functions of legislation, and to those associated with you, I look with encouragement for that guidance and support which may enable us to steer with safety the vessel in which we are all embarked, amidst the conflicting elements of a troubled world.

During the contest of opinion through which we have passed,

the animation of discussions and of exertions has sometimes worn an aspect which might impose on strangers unused to think freely, and to speak and to write what they think ; but this being now decided by the voice of the nation, announced according to the rules of the Constitution, all will of course arrange themselves under the will of the law, and unite in common efforts for the common good. All too will bear in mind this sacred principle, that though the will of the majority is in all cases to prevail, that will, to be rightful, must be reasonable ; that the minority possess their equal rights, which equal laws must protect, and to violate which would be oppression. Let us, then, fellow-citizens, unite with one heart and one mind, let us restore to social intercourse that harmony and affection without which liberty, and even life itself, are but dreary things. And let us reflect, that having banished from our land that religious intolerance under which mankind so long bled and suffered, we have yet gained little, if we countenance a political intolerance, as despotic as wicked, and capable of as bitter and bloody persecutions. During the throes and convulsions of the ancient world, during the agonizing spasms of infuriated man, seeking through blood and slaughter his long-lost liberty, it was not wonderful that the agitation of the billows should reach even this distant and peaceful shore ; that this should be felt and feared by some, and less by others ; and should divide opinions as to measures of safety ; but every difference of opinion is not a difference of principle. We have called by different names brethren of the same principle. We are all Republicans ; we are all Federalists. If there be any among us who would wish to dissolve this Union, or to change its Republican form, let them stand undisturbed as monuments of the safety with which error of opinion may be tolerated, where reason is left free to combat it. I know, indeed, that some honest men fear that a Republican government cannot be strong ; that this government is not strong enough. But would the honest patriot, in the full tide of successful experiment, abandon a government which has so far kept us free and firm, on the theoretic and visionary fear, that this government, the world's best hope, may, by possibility, want energy to preserve itself ? I trust not. I believe this, on the contrary, the strongest government on earth. I believe it the only one, where every man, at the call of the law, would fly to the standard of the law, and would meet the inva-

sions of the public order as his own personal concern. Sometimes it is said, that man cannot be trusted with the government of himself. Can he then be trusted with the government of others? Or, have we found angels in the form of kings, to govern him? Let history answer this question.

Let us, then, with courage and confidence, pursue our own Federal and Republican principles; our attachment to union and representative government. Kindly separated by nature and a wide ocean from the exterminating havoc of one-quarter of the globe; too high-minded to endure the degradations of the others; possessing a chosen country, with room enough for our descendants to the thousandth and thousandth generation; entertaining a due sense of our equal right to the use of our own faculties, to the acquisition of our own industry, to honor and confidence from our fellow-citizens, resulting not from birth, but from our actions and our sense of them; enlightened by a benign religion, professed indeed and practiced in various forms, yet all of them inculcating honesty, truth, temperance, gratitude, and the love of man; acknowledging and adoring an overruling Providence, which, by all its dispensations, proves that it delights in the happiness of man here, and his greater happiness hereafter; with all these blessings, what more is necessary to make us a happy and prosperous nation? Still one thing more, fellow-citizens, a wise and frugal government which shall restrain men from injuring one another, shall leave them free to regulate their own pursuit of industry and improvement, and shall not take from the mouth the bread it has earned. This is the sum of good government; and this is necessary to close the circle of our felicities.

About to enter, fellow-citizens, on the exercise of duties which comprehend everything dear and valuable to you, it is proper you should understand what I deem the essential principles of our government, and consequently, those which ought to shape its administration. I will compress them within the narrowest compass they will bear, stating the general principle, but not all its limitations. Equal and exact justice to all men, of whatever state or persuasion, religious or political; peace, commerce, and honest friendship with all nations, entangling alliances with none; the support of the State governments in all their rights, as the most competent administrations for our domestic

concerns, and the surest bulwarks against anti-Republican tendencies; the preservation of the general government in its whole constitutional vigor, as the sheet-anchor of our peace at home, and safety abroad; a jealous care of the right of election by the people, a mild and safe corrective of abuses which are lopped by the sword of revolution where peaceable remedies are unprovided; absolute acquiescence in the decisions of the majority, the vital principle of the republics, from which there is no appeal but to force, the vital principle and immediate parent of despotism; a well-disciplined militia, our best reliance in peace, and for the first moments of war, till regulars may relieve them; the supremacy of the civil over the military authority; economy in the public expense, that labor might be lightly burdened; the honest payment of our debts and sacred preservation of the public faith; encouragement of agriculture, and of commerce as its handmaid; the diffusion of information, and arraignment of all abuses at the bar of public reason; freedom of religion; freedom of the press; and freedom of person, under the protection of the habeas corpus; and trial by juries impartially selected. These principles form the bright constellation which has gone before us, and guided our steps through an age of revolution and reformation. The wisdom of our sages, and blood of our heroes, have been devoted to their attainment; they should be the creed of our political faith, the text of civic instruction, the touchstone by which to try the services of those we trust; and should we wander from them in moments of error or of alarm, let us hasten to retrace our steps, and to regain the road which alone leads to peace, liberty, and safety.

I repair, then, fellow-citizens, to the post you have assigned me. With experience enough in subordinate offices to have seen the difficulties of this, the greatest of all, I have learned to expect that it will rarely fall to the lot of imperfect man, to retire from this station with the reputation and the favor which bring him to it. Without pretensions to that high confidence you reposed in our first and greatest revolutionary character, whose pre-eminent services had entitled him to the first place in his country's love, and destined for him the fairest page in the volume of faithful history, I ask so much confidence only as may give firmness and effect to the legal administration of your affairs. I shall often go wrong through defect of judgment.

When right, I shall often be thought wrong by those whose positions will not command a view of the whole ground. I ask your indulgence for my own errors, which will never be intentional; and your support against the errors of others, who may condemn what they would not, if seen in all its parts. The approbation implied by your suffrage, is a great consolation to me for the past; and my future solicitude will be, to retain the good opinion of those who have bestowed it in advance, to conciliate that of others, by doing them all the good in my power, and to be instrumental to the happiness and freedom of all.

Relying, then, on the patronage of your good-will, I advance with obedience to the work, ready to retire from it whenever you become sensible how much better choice it is in your power to make. And may that Infinite Power which rules the destinies of the universe, lead our councils to what is best, and give them a favorable issue of your peace and prosperity.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

1809-1865

Lincoln belongs to the ages first and foremost as the great emancipator, but his literary skill was by no means negligible. The inaugural speeches are masterpieces of their kind, and the Gettysburg Address will always rank first in oratorical literature.

GETTYSBURG ADDRESS

FOURLSCORE and seven years ago our fathers brought forth on this continent a new nation, conceived in liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal.

Now we are engaged in a great civil war, testing whether that nation, or any nation so conceived and so dedicated, can long endure. We are met on a great battlefield of that war. We have come to dedicate a portion of that field as a final resting-place for those who here gave their lives that the nation might live. It is altogether fitting and proper that we should do this. But, in a larger sense, we cannot dedicate—we cannot consecrate—we cannot hallow—this ground. The brave men, living and dead, who struggled here have consecrated it, far above our poor power to add or detract. The world will little note, nor long remember what we say here, but it can never forget what they did here. It is for us the living, rather, to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they who fought here have thus far so nobly advanced. It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us—that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion—that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain—that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth.

FIRST INAUGURAL ADDRESS

FELOW-CITIZENS of the United States: In compliance with a custom as old as the Government itself, I appear before you to address you briefly, and to take in your presence the oath prescribed by the Constitution of the United States to be taken

by the President "before he enters on the execution of his office."

I do not consider it necessary at present for me to discuss those matters of administration about which there is no special anxiety or excitement.

Apprehension seems to exist among the people of the Southern States that by the accession of a Republican Administration their property and their peace and personal security are to be endangered. There has never been any reasonable cause for such apprehensions. Indeed, the most ample evidence to the contrary has all the while existed and been open to their inspection. It is found in nearly all the published speeches of him who now addresses you. I do but quote from one of those speeches when I declare that "I have no purpose, directly or indirectly, to interfere with the institution of slavery in the States where it exists. I believe I have no lawful right to do so, and I have no inclination to do so." Those who nominated and elected me did so with full knowledge that I had made this and many similar declarations, and had never recanted them. And, more than this, they placed in the platform for my acceptance, and as a law to themselves and to me, the clear and emphatic resolution which I now read:

Resolved, That the maintenance inviolate of the rights of the States, and especially the right of each State to order and control its own domestic institutions according to its own judgment exclusively, is essential to that balance of power on which the perfection and endurance of our political fabric depend, and we denounce the lawless invasion by armed force of the soil of any State or Territory, no matter under what pretext, as among the gravest of crimes."

I now reiterate these sentiments; and, in doing so, I only press upon the public attention the most conclusive evidence of which the case is susceptible, that the property, peace, and security of no section are to be in any wise endangered by the now incoming Administration. I add, too, that all the protection which, consistently with the Constitution and the laws, can be given, will be cheerfully given to all the States when lawfully demanded, for whatever cause—as cheerfully to one section, as to another.

There is much controversy about the delivering up of fugitives from service or labor. The clause I now read is as plainly written

in the Constitution as any other of its provisions:

"No person held to service or labor in one State, under the laws thereof, escaping into another, shall in consequence of any law or regulation therein be discharged from such service or labor, but shall be delivered up on claim of the party to whom such service or labor may be due."

It is scarcely questioned that this provision was intended by those who made it for the reclaiming of what we call fugitive slaves; and the intention of the lawgiver is the law. All Members of Congress swear their support to the whole Constitution—to this provision as much as to any other. To the proposition, then, that slaves whose cases come within the terms of this clause, "shall be delivered up," their oaths are unanimous. Now, if they would make the effort in good temper, could they not with nearly equal unanimity frame and pass a law by means of which to keep good that unanimous oath?

There is some difference of opinion whether this clause should be enforced by the National or by State authority; but surely that difference is not a very material one. If the slave is to be surrendered, it can be of but little consequence to him, or to others, by which authority it is done. And should anyone, in any case, be content that his oath shall go unkept, on a merely unsubstantial controversy as to *how* it shall be kept?

Again, in any law upon this subject, ought not all the safeguards of liberty known in civilized and humane jurisprudence to be introduced so that a free man be not, in any case, surrendered as a slave? And might it not be well at the same time to provide by law for the enforcement of that clause in the Constitution which guarantees that "the citizen of each State shall be entitled to all privileges and immunities of citizens in the several States?"

I take the official oath today with no mental reservations and with no purpose to construe the Constitution or laws by any hypercritical rules. And while I do not choose now to specify particular acts of Congress as proper to be enforced, I do suggest that it will be much safer for all, both in official and private stations, to conform to and abide by all those acts which stand unrepealed, than to violate any of them trusting to find impunity in having them held to be unconstitutional.

It is seventy-two years since the first inauguration of a Presi-

dent under our National Constitution. During that period fifteen different and greatly distinguished citizens have, in succession, administered the Executive branch of the Government. They have conducted it through many perils, and generally with great success. Yet, with all this scope of precedent, I now enter upon the same task for the brief constitutional term of four years under great and peculiar difficulty. A disruption of the Federal Union, heretofore only menaced, is now formidably attempted.

I hold that, in contemplation of universal law and of the Constitution, the Union of these States is perpetual. Perpetuity is implied, if not expressed, in the fundamental law of all national governments. It is safe to assert that no government proper ever had a provision in its organic law for its own termination. Continue to execute all the express provisions of our National Constitution, and the Union will endure forever—it being impossible to destroy it except by some action not provided for in the instrument itself.

Again, if the United States be not a Government proper, but an association of States in the nature of contract merely, can it, as a contract, be peaceably unmade by less than all the parties who made it? One party to a contract may violate it—break it, so to speak, but does it not require all to lawfully rescind it?

Descending from these general principles, we find the proposition that, in legal contemplation, the Union is perpetual, confirmed by the history of the Union itself. The Union is much older than the Constitution. It was formed, in fact, by the Articles of Association in 1774. It was matured and continued by the Declaration of Independence in 1776. It was further matured, and the faith of all the then thirteen States expressly plighted and engaged that it should be perpetual, by the Articles of Confederation in 1778. And, finally, in 1787, one of the declared objects for ordaining and establishing the Constitution was, "*to form a more perfect Union.*"

But if the destruction of the Union by one, or by a part only, of the States be lawfully possible, the Union is *less* perfect than before the Constitution, having lost the vital element of perpetuity.

It follows from these views that no State, upon its own mere motion, can lawfully get out of the Union; that *resolves* and *ordinances* to that effect are legally void; and that acts of vio-

lence, within any State or States, against the authority of the United States, are insurrectionary or revolutionary, according to circumstances.

I therefore consider that, in view of the Constitution and the laws, the Union is unbroken; and to the extent of my ability I shall take care, as the Constitution itself expressly enjoins upon me, that the laws of the Union be faithfully executed in all of the States. Doing this I deem to be only a simple duty on my part; and I shall perform it, so far as practicable, unless my rightful masters, the American people, shall withhold the requisite means, or in some authoritative manner direct the contrary. I trust this will not be regarded as a menace, but only as the declared purpose of the Union that it will constitutionally defend and maintain itself.

In doing this there needs to be no bloodshed or violence; and there shall be none, unless it be forced upon the national authority. The power confided to me will be used to hold, occupy, and possess the property and places belonging to the Government, and to collect the duties and imposts; but beyond what may be necessary for these objects, there will be no invasion, no using of force against or among the people anywhere. Where hostility to the United States, in any interior locality, shall be so great and universal as to prevent competent resident citizens from holding the Federal offices, there will be no attempt to force obnoxious strangers among the people for that object. While the strict legal right may exist in the Government to enforce the exercise of these offices, the attempt to do so would be so irritating, and so nearly impracticable withal, that I deem it better to forego for the time the uses of such offices.

The mails, unless repelled, will continue to be furnished in all parts of the Union. So far as possible, the people everywhere shall have that sense of perfect security which is most favorable to calm thought and reflection. The course here indicated will be followed unless current events and experience shall show a modification or change to be proper, and in every case and exigency my best discretion will be exercised according to circumstances actually existing, and with a view and a hope of a peaceful solution of the national troubles, and the restoration of fraternal sympathies and affections.

That there are persons in one section or another who seek to

destroy the Union at all events, and are glad of any pretext to do it, I will neither affirm nor deny; but if there be such, I need address no word to them. To those, however, who really love the Union may I not speak?

Before entering upon so grave a matter as the destruction of our national fabric, with all its benefits, its memories, and its hopes, would it not be wise to ascertain precisely why we do it? Will you hazard so desperate a step while there is any possibility that any portion of the ills you fly from have no real existence? Will you, while the certain ills you fly to are greater than all the real ones you fly from—will you risk the commission of so fearful a mistake?

All profess to be content in the Union, if all constitutional rights can be maintained. It is true, then, that any right, plainly written in the Constitution, has been denied? I think not. Happily the human mind is so constituted, that no party can reach to the audacity of doing this. Think, if you can, of a single instance in which a plainly written provision of the Constitution has ever been denied. If by the mere force of numbers a majority should deprive a minority in any clearly written constitutional right, it might, in a moral point of view, justify revolution—certainly would if such a right were a vital one. But such is not our case. All the vital rights of minorities and of individuals are so plainly assured to them by affirmations and negations, guaranties and prohibitions, in the Constitution, that controversies never arise concerning them. But no organic law can ever be framed with a provision specifically applicable to every question which may occur in practical administration. No foresight can anticipate, nor any document of reasonable length contain, express provisions for all possible questions. Shall fugitives from labor be surrendered by national or by State authority? The Constitution does not expressly say. *May* Congress prohibit slavery in the Territories? The Constitution does not expressly say. *Must* Congress protect slavery in the Territories? The Constitution does not expressly say.

From questions of this class spring all our constitutional controversies, and we divide upon them into majorities and minorities. If the minority will not acquiesce, the majority must, or the Government must cease. There is no other alternative; for continuing the Government is acquiescence on one side or the other.

If a minority in such case will secede rather than acquiesce, they make a precedent which in turn will divide and ruin them; for a minority of their own will secede from them whenever a majority refuses to be controlled by such minority. For instance, why may not any portion of a new confederacy a year or two hence arbitrarily secede again, precisely as portions of the present Union now claim to secede from it? All who cherish disunion sentiments are now being educated to the exact temper of doing this.

Is there such perfect identity of interests among the States to compose a new Union as to produce harmony only, and prevent renewed secession?

Plainly, the central idea of secession is the essence of anarchy. A majority held in restraint by constitutional checks and limitations, and always changing easily with deliberate changes of popular opinions and sentiments, is the only true sovereign of a free people. Whoever rejects it does, of necessity, fly to anarchy or to despotism. Unanimity is impossible; the rule of a minority, as a permanent arrangement, is wholly inadmissible; so that, rejecting the majority principle, anarchy or despotism in some form is all that is left.

I do not forget the position, assumed by some, that constitutional questions are to be decided by the Supreme Court; nor do I deny that such decisions must be binding, in any case, upon the parties to a suit, as to the object of that suit, while they are also entitled to very high respect and consideration in all parallel cases by all other departments of the Government. And while it is obviously possible that such decision may be erroneous in any given case, still the evil effect following it, being limited to that particular case, with the chance that it may be overruled and never become a precedent for other cases, can better be borne than could the evils of a different practice. At the same time, the candid citizen must confess that if the policy of the Government, upon vital questions affecting the whole people, is to be irrevocably fixed by decisions of the Supreme Court, the instant they are made, in ordinary litigation between parties in personal actions, the people will have ceased to be their own rulers, having to that extent practically resigned their government into the hands of that eminent tribunal. Nor is there in this view any assault upon the court or the judges. It is a duty from

which they may not shrink to decide cases properly brought before them, and it is no fault of theirs if others seek to turn their decisions to political purposes.

One section of our country believes slavery is *right*, and ought to be extended, while the other believes it is *wrong*, and ought not to be extended. This is the only substantial dispute. The fugitive-slave clause of the Constitution, and the law for the suppression of the foreign slave trade, are each as well enforced, perhaps, as any law can ever be in a community where the moral sense of the people imperfectly supports the law itself. The great body of the people abide by the dry legal obligation in both cases, and a few break over in each. This, I think, cannot be perfectly cured; and it would be worse in both cases *after* the separation of the sections, than before. The foreign slave trade, now imperfectly suppressed, would be ultimately revived without restriction, in one section; while fugitive slaves, now only partially surrendered, would not be surrendered at all by the other.

Physically speaking, we cannot separate. We cannot remove our respective sections from each other, nor build an impassable wall between them. A husband and wife may be divorced, and go out of the presence and beyond the reach of each other; but the different parts of our country cannot do this. They cannot but remain face to face, and intercourse, either amicable or hostile, must continue between them. Is it possible, then, to make that intercourse more advantageous or more satisfactory *after* separation than *before*? Can aliens make treaties easier than friends can make laws? Can treaties be more faithfully enforced between aliens than laws can among friends? Suppose you go to war, you cannot fight always; and when, after much loss on both sides, and no gain on either, you cease fighting, the identical old questions as to terms of intercourse are again upon you.

This country, with its institutions, belongs to the people who inhabit it. Whenever they shall grow weary of the existing Government, they can exercise their *constitutional* right of amending it, or their *revolutionary* right to dismember or overthrow it. I cannot be ignorant of the fact that many worthy and patriotic citizens are desirous of having the National Constitution amended. While I make no recommendation of amend-

ments, I fully recognize the rightful authority of the people over the whole subject, to be exercised in either of the modes prescribed in the instrument itself; and I should, under existing circumstances, favor rather than oppose a fair opportunity being afforded the people to act upon it. I will venture to add that to me the convention mode seems preferable, in that it allows amendments to originate with the people themselves, instead of only permitting them to take or reject propositions originated by others, not especially chosen for the purpose, and which might not be precisely such as they would wish to either accept or refuse. I understand a proposed amendment to the Constitution—which amendment, however, I have not seen—has passed Congress, to the effect that the Federal Government shall never interfere with the domestic institutions of the States, including that of persons held to service. To avoid misconstruction of what I have said, I depart from my purpose, not to speak of particular amendments, so far as to say that, holding such a provision to now be implied constitutional law, I have no objection to its being made express or irrevocable.

The Chief Magistrate derives all his authority from the people, and they have conferred none upon him to fix terms for the separation of the States. The people themselves can do this also if they choose; but the Executive, as such, has nothing to do with it. His duty is to administer the present Government, as it came to his hands, and to transmit it, unimpaired by him, to his successor.

Why should there not be a patient confidence in the ultimate justice of the people? Is there any better or equal hope in the world? In our present differences is either party without faith of being in the right? If the Almighty Ruler of Nations, with his eternal truth and justice, be on your side of the North, or on yours of the South, that truth and that justice will surely prevail by the judgment of this great tribunal of the American people.

By the frame of the Government under which we live, this same people have wisely given their public servants but little power for mischief; and have, with equal wisdom, provided for the return of that little to their own hands at very short intervals. While the people retain their virtue and vigilance, no administration, by any extreme of wickedness or folly, can very seriously injure the government in the short space of four years.

My countrymen, one and all, think calmly and *well* upon this whole subject. Nothing valuable can be lost by taking time. If there be an object to *hurry* any of you in hot haste to a step which you would never take *deliberately*, that object will be frustrated by taking time; but no good object can be frustrated by it. Such of you as are now dissatisfied, still have the old Constitution unimpaired, and, on the sensitive point, the laws of your own framing under it; while the new Administration will have no immediate power, if it would, to change either. If it were admitted that you who are dissatisfied hold the right side in the dispute, there still is no single good reason for precipitate action. Intelligence, patriotism, Christianity, and a firm reliance on Him who has never yet forsaken this favored land are still competent to adjust, in the best way, all our present difficulty.

In *your* hands, my dissatisfied fellow-countrymen, and not in *mine*, is the momentous issue of civil war. The Government will not assail *you*. You can have no conflict without being yourselves the aggressors. *You* have no oath registered in Heaven to destroy the Government, while I shall have the most solemn one to "preserve, protect, and defend it."

I am loth to close. We are not enemies, but friends. We must not be enemies. Though passion may have strained, it must not break our bonds of affection. The mystic chords of memory, stretching from every battle-field and patriot grave to every living heart and hearthstone all over this broad land, will yet swell the chorus of the Union, when again touched, as surely they will be, by the better angels of our nature.

HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW

1807-1882

Born in Portland, Maine, a descendant of John and Priscilla Alden. Educated at Bowdoin College. Studied law in his father's office, abandoning the study to become professor of modern languages at Bowdoin and, later, professor of Belles-Lettres at Harvard. A journey in Europe was saddened by the death of his wife. He married again, and lived very happily in the midst of his family, doing his best work, until his second wife was burnt to death, a tragedy from which he never fully recovered. His later life was passed tranquilly in Cambridge, where his house was the object of pilgrimages from all parts of Europe and America. Longfellow's prose work consists of travel sketches and short stories. His fame attaches to such poems as "Evangeline," "Hiawatha," and "The Courtship of Miles Standish," and to the translation of Dante's "Divina Commedia."

THE NOTARY OF PÉRIGUEUX.

Do not trust thy body with a physician. He'll make thy foolish bones go without flesh in a fortnight, and thy soul walk without a body a sennight after.—SHIRLEY.

YOU must know, gentlemen, that there lived some years ago, Y in the city of Périgueux, an honest notary-public, the descendant of a very ancient and broken-down family, and the occupant of one of those old weather-beaten tenements which remind you of times of your great-grandfather. He was a man of an unoffending, quiet disposition; the father of a family, though not the head of it,—for in that family "the hen overcrowded the cock," and the neighbors, when they spake of the notary, shrugged their shoulders, and exclaimed, "Poor fellow! his spurs want sharpening." In fine,—you understand me, gentlemen,—he was henpecked.

Well, finding no peace at home, he sought it elsewhere, as was very natural for him to do, and at length discovered a place of rest, far beyond the cares and clamors of domestic life. This was a little *Café Estaminet*, a short way out of the city, whither he repaired every evening to smoke his pipe, drink sugar-water, and play his favorite game of domino. There he met the boon companions he most loved; heard all the floating chitchat of the day; laughed when he was in merry mood; found consolation when he was sad; and at all times gave vent to his opinions,

without fear of being snubbed short by a flat contradiction.

Now, the notary's bosom-friend was a dealer in claret and cognac, who lived about a league from the city, and always passed his evenings at the *Estaminet*. He was a gross, corpulent fellow, raised from a full-blooded Gascon breed, and sired by a comic actor of some reputation in his way. He was remarkable for nothing but his good-humor, his love of cards, and a strong propensity to test the quality of his own liquors by comparing them with those sold at other places.

As evil communications corrupt good manners, the bad practices of the wine-dealer won insensibly upon the worthy notary; and before he was aware of it, he found himself weaned from domino and sugar-water, and addicted to piquet and spiced wine. Indeed, it not unfrequently happened, that, after a long session at the *Estaminet*, the two friends grew so urbane, that they would waste a full half-hour at the door in friendly dispute which should conduct the other home. Though this course of life agreed well enough with the sluggish, phlegmatic temperament of the wine-dealer, it soon began to play the very deuce with the more sensitive organization of the notary, and finally put his nervous system completely out of tune. He lost his appetite, became gaunt and haggard, and could get no sleep. Legions of the blue-devils haunted him by day, and by night strange faces peeped through his bed-curtains, and the nightmare snorted in his ear. The worse he grew, the more he smoked and tippled; and the more he smoked and tippled,—why, as a matter of course, the worse he grew. His wife alternately stormed, remonstrated, entreated; but all in vain. She made the house too hot for him,—he retreated to the tavern; she broke his long-stemmed pipes upon the andirons,—he substituted a short-stemmed one, which, for safe-keeping, he carried in his waistcoat-pocket.

Thus the unhappy notary ran gradually down at the heel. What with his bad habits and his domestic grievances, he became completely hipped. He imagined that he was going to die, and suffered in quick succession all the diseases that ever beset mortal man. Every shooting pain was an alarming symptom,—every uneasy feeling after dinner a sure prognostic of some mortal disease. In vain did his friends endeavor to reason, and then to laugh him out of his strange whims; for when did

ever jest or reason cure a sick imagination? His only answer was, "Do let me alone; I know better than you what ails me."

Well, gentlemen, things were in this state, when, one afternoon in December, as he sat moping in his office wrapped in an overcoat, with a cap on his head and his feet thrust into a pair of furred slippers, a cabriolet stopped at the door and a loud knocking without aroused him from his gloomy reverie. It was a message from his friend the wine-dealer, who had been suddenly attacked with a violent fever, and growing worse and worse, had now sent in the greatest haste for the notary to draw up his last will and testament. The case was urgent and admitted neither excuse nor delay; and the notary, tying a handkerchief round his face, and buttoning up to the chin, jumped into the cabriolet, and suffered himself, though not without some dismal presentiments and misgivings of heart, to be driven to the wine-dealer's house.

When he arrived, he found everything in the greatest confusion. On entering the house, he ran against the apothecary, who was coming downstairs, with a face as long as your arm; and a few steps farther he met the housekeeper—for the wine-dealer was an old bachelor—running up and down, and wringing her hands, for fear that the good man should die without making his will. He soon reached the chamber of his sick friend, and found him tossing about in a paroxysm of fever and calling aloud for a draught of cold water. The notary shook his head; he thought this a fatal symptom; for ten years back the wine-dealer had been suffering under a species of hydrophobia, which seemed suddenly to have left him.

When the sick man saw who stood by his bedside, he stretched out his hand and exclaimed,—

"Ah! my dear friend! have you come at last? You see it is all over with me. You have arrived just in time to draw up that—that passport of mine. Ah, *grand diable!* how hot it is here! Water,—water,—water! Will nobody give me a drop of cold water?"

As the case was an urgent one, the notary made no delay in getting his papers in readiness; and in a short time the last will and testament of the wine-dealer was drawn up in due form, the notary guiding the sick man's hand as he scrawled his signature at the bottom.

As the evening wore away, the wine-dealer grew worse and worse, and at length became delirious, mingling in his incoherent ravings the phrases of the Credo and Paternoster with the shibboleth of the dram-shop and the card-table.

"Take care! take care! There, now—*Credo in—Pop!* ting-a-ling-ling! give me some of that. Cent-é-dize! Why, you old publican, this wine is poisoned,—I know your tricks!—*Sanctam ecclesiam catholicam*—Well, well, we shall see. Imbecile! to have a tierce-major and a seven of hearts, and discard the seven! By St. Anthony, capot! You are lurched,—ha! ha! I told you so. I knew very well,—there,—there,—don't interrupt me—*Carnis resurrectionem et vitam eternam!*"

With these words upon his lips, the poor wine-dealer expired. Meanwhile the notary sat cowering over the fire, aghast at the fearful scene that was passing before him, and now and then striving to keep up his courage by a glass of cognac. Already his fears were on the alert; and the idea of contagion flitted to and fro through his mind. In order to quiet these thoughts of evil import, he lighted his pipe and began to prepare for returning home. At that moment the apothecary turned round to him and said,—

"Dreadful sickly time this! The disorder seems to be spreading."

"What disorder?" exclaimed the notary, with a movement of surprise.

"Two died yesterday, and three today," continued the apothecary, without answering the question. "Very sickly time, sir—very."

"But what disorder is it? What disease has carried off my friend here so suddenly?"

"What disease? Why, scarlet fever, to be sure."

"And is it contagious?"

"Certainly!"

"Then I am a dead man!" exclaimed the notary, putting his pipe into his waistcoat-pocket, and beginning to walk up and down the room in despair. "I am a dead man! Now, don't deceive me,—don't, will you? What—what are the symptoms?"

"A sharp burning pain in the right side," said the apothecary.

"Oh, what a fool I was to come here!"

In vain did the housekeeper and the apothecary strive to

pacify him;—he was not a man to be reasoned with; he answered that he knew his own constitution better than they did, and insisted upon going home without delay. Unfortunately, the vehicle he came in had returned to the city, and the whole neighborhood was abed and asleep. What was to be done? Nothing in the world but to take the apothecary's horse, which stood hitched at the door, patiently waiting his master's will.

Well, gentlemen, as there was no remedy, our notary mounted this raw-boned steed and set forth upon his homeward journey. The night was cold and gusty, and the wind right in his teeth. Overhead the leaden clouds were beating to and fro, and through them the newly risen moon seemed to be tossing and drifting along like a cock-boat in the surf; now swallowed up in a huge billow of cloud, and now lifted upon its bosom and dashed with silvery spray. The trees by the roadside groaned with a sound of evil omen, and before him lay three mortal miles, beset with a thousand imaginary perils. Obedient to the whip and spur, the steed leaped forward by fits and starts, now dashing away in a tremendous gallop, and now relaxing into a long, hard trot; while the rider, filled with symptoms of disease and dire presentiments of death, urged him on, as if he were fleeing before the pestilence.

In this way, by dint of whistling and shouting, and beating right and left, one mile of the fatal three was safely passed. The apprehensions of the notary had so far subsided, that he even suffered the poor horse to walk up hill; but these apprehensions were suddenly revived again with tenfold violence by a sharp pain in the right side, which seemed to pierce him like a needle.

"It is upon me at last!" groaned the fear-stricken man. "Heaven be merciful to me, the greatest of sinners! And must I die in a ditch, after all? He! get up,—get up!"

And away went horse and rider at full speed,—hurry-scurry, —up hill and down,—panting and blowing like a whirlwind. At every leap the pain in the rider's side seemed to increase. At first it was a little point like the prick of a needle,—then it spread to the size of a half-franc piece,—then covered a place as large as the palm of your hand. It gained upon him fast. The poor man groaned aloud in agony; faster and faster sped the horse over the frozen ground,—farther and farther spread the pain over his side. To complete the dismal picture, the storm

commenced,—snow mingled with rain. But snow and rain and cold were naught to him; for, though his arms and legs were frozen to icicles, he felt it not; the fatal symptom was upon him; he was doomed to die,—not of cold, but of scarlet fever!

At length, he knew not how, more dead than alive, he reached the gate of the city. A band of ill-bred dogs, that were serenading at a corner of the street, seeing the notary dash by, joined in the hue and cry, and ran barking and yelping at his heels. It was now late at night, and only here and there a solitary lamp twinkled from an upper story. But on went the notary, down this street and up that, till at last he reached his own door. There was a light in his wife's bedroom. The good woman came to the window, alarmed at such a knocking, and howling, and clattering at her door so late at night; and the notary was too deeply absorbed in his own sorrows to observe that the lamp cast the shadow of two heads on the window-curtain.

"Let me in! let me in! Quick! quick!" he exclaimed, almost breathless from terror and fatigue.

"Who are you, that come to disturb a lone woman at this hour of the night?" cried a sharp voice from above. "Begone about your business, and let quiet people sleep."

"Come down and let me in! I am your husband. Don't you know my voice? Quick, I beseech you, for I am dying here in the street!"

After a few moments of delay and a few more words of parley, the door was opened, and the notary stalked into his domicile, pale and haggard in aspect, and as stiff and straight as a ghost. Cased from head to heel in an armor of ice, as the glare of the lamp fell upon him, he looked like a knight-errant mailed in steel. But in one place his armor was broken. On his right side was a circular spot, as large as the crown of your hat, and about as black!

"My dear wife!" he exclaimed, with more tenderness than he had exhibited for many years. "Reach me a chair. My hours are numbered. I am a dead man!"

Alarmed at these exclamations, his wife stripped off his over-coat. Something fell from beneath it, and was dashed to pieces on the hearth. It was the notary's pipe! He placed his hand upon his side, and lo! it was bare to the skin! Coat, waistcoat, and linen were burnt through and through, and there was a blis-

ter on his side as large as your hand!

The mystery was soon explained, symptom and all. The notary had put his pipe into his pocket without knocking out the ashes! And so my story ends.

"Is that all?" asked the radical, when the story-teller had finished.

"That is all."

"Well, what does your story prove?"

"That is more than I can tell. All I know is that the story is true."

"And did he die?" said the nice little man in gosling-green.

"Yes, he died afterwards," replied the story-teller, rather annoyed by the question.

"And what did he die of?" continued gosling-green, following him up.

"What did he die of? why, he died—of a sudden!"

JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL 1819-1891

Lowell, together with Washington Irving, is considered representative of the best American life and letters. The descendant of Puritans who had made history in Massachusetts, he was carefully reared. He studied law at Harvard and presently opened an office in Boston, but spent most of his time reading and writing poetry. In 1844 he married, and under the influence of his wife became an ardent abolitionist. In 1848 he published his best volume of poems. In 1854 he became professor of English poetry at Harvard, and soon after first editor of the "Atlantic Monthly," in which he published some of his best essays. After the Civil War he was U. S. minister to Spain and England. He died peacefully in the same house in which he had been born.

IN THE MEDITERRANEAN

THE first sight of a shore so historical as that of Europe gives an American a strange thrill. What we always feel the artistic want of at home is background. It is all idle to say we are Englishmen, and that English history is ours too. It is precisely in this that we are *not* Englishmen, inasmuch as we only possess their history through our minds, and not by life-long association with a spot and an idea we call England. History without the soil it grew in is more instructive than inspiring—an acquisition, and not an inheritance. It is laid away in our memories, and does not run in our veins. Surely, in all that concerns aesthetics, Europeans have us at an immense advantage. They start at a point which we arrive at after weary years, for literature is not shut up in books, nor art in galleries: both are taken in by unconscious absorption through the finer pores of mind and character in the atmosphere of society. We are not yet out of our Crusoehood, and must make our own tools as best we may. Yet I think we shall find the good of it one of these days, in being thrown back more wholly on nature; and our literature, when we have learned to feel our own strength, and to respect our own thought because it is ours, and not because the European Mrs. Grundy agrees with it, will have a fresh flavour and a strong body that will recommend it, especially as what we import is watered more and more liberally with every vintage.

My first glimpse of Europe was the shore of Spain. Since we got into the Mediterranean, we have been becalmed for some days within easy view of it. All along are fine mountains, brown all day, and with a bloom on them at sunset like that of a ripe plum. Here and there at their feet little white towns are sprinkled along the edge of the water, like the grains of rice dropped by the princess in the story. Sometimes we see larger buildings on the mountain slopes, probably convents. I sit and wonder whether the farther peaks may not be the Sierra Morena(the rusty saw) of Don Quixote. I resolve that they shall be, and am content. Surely latitude and longitude never showed me any particular respect, that I should be over-scrupulous with them.

But, after all, Nature, though she may be more beautiful, is nowhere so entertaining as in man, and the best thing I have seen and learned at sea is our Chief Mate. My first acquaintance with him was made over my knife, which he asked to look at, and, after a critical examination, handed back to me, saying, "I shouldn't wonder if that 'ere was a good piece o' stuff." Since then he has transferred a part of his regard for my knife to its owner. I like folks who like an honest piece of steel, and take no interest whatever in "your Raphaels, Correggios, and stuff." There is always more than the average human nature in a man who has a hearty sympathy with iron. It is a manly metal, with no sordid associations like gold and silver. My sailor fully came up to my expectation on further acquaintance. He might well be called an old salt who had been wrecked on Spitzbergen before I was born. He was not an American, but I should never have guessed it by his speech, which was the purest Cape Cod, and I reckon myself a good taster of dialects. Nor was he less Americanized in all his thoughts and feelings, a singular proof of the ease with which our omnivorous country assimilates foreign matter, provided it be Protestant, for he was a man ere he became an American citizen. He used to walk the deck with his hands in his pockets, in seeming abstraction, but nothing escaped his eye. *How* he saw, I could never make out, though I had a theory that it was with his elbows. After he had taken me (or my knife) into his confidence, he took care that I should see whatever he deemed of interest to a landsman. Without looking up, he would say, suddenly, "There's a whale blowin' clearn up to win'ard," or

"Them's porpises to leeward: that means change o' wind." He is as impervious to cold as the polar bear, and paces the deck during his watch much as one of those yellow hummocks goes slumping up and down his cage. On the Atlantic, if the wind blew a gale from the northeast, and it was cold as an English summer, he was sure to turn out in a calico shirt and trousers, his furzy brown chest half bare, and slippers, without stockings. But lest you might fancy this to have chanced by defect of wardrobe, he comes out in a monstrous pea-jacket here in the Mediterranean when the evening is so hot that Adam would have been glad to leave off his fig-leaves. "It's a kind o' damp and unwholesome in these 'ere waters," he says, evidently regarding the Midland Sea as a vile standing pool, in comparison with the bluff ocean. At meals he is superb, not only for his strengths, but his weaknesses. He has somehow or other come to think me a wag, and if I ask him to pass the butter, detects an occult joke, and laughs as much as is proper for a mate. For you must know that our social hierarchy on shipboard is precise, and the second mate, were he present, would only laugh half as much as the first. Mr. X. always combs his hair, and works himself into a black frock-coat (on Sundays he adds a waistcoat) before he comes to meals, sacrificing himself nobly and painfully to the social proprieties. The second mate, on the other hand, who eats after us, enjoys the privilege of shirt-sleeves, and is, I think, the happier man of the two. We do not have seats above and below the salt, as in old time, but above and below the white sugar. Mr. X. always takes brown sugar, and it is delightful to see how he ignores the existence of certain delicacies which he considers above his grade, tipping his head on one side with an air of abstraction, so that he may seem not to deny himself, but to omit helping himself from inadvertence or absence of mind. At such times he wrinkles his forehead in a peculiar manner, inscrutable at first as a cuneiform inscription, but as easily read after you once get the key. The sense of it is something like this: "I, X., know my place, a height of wisdom attained by few. Whatever you may think, I do *not* see that currant jelly, nor that preserved grape. Especially, a kind Providence has made me blind to bowls of white sugar, and deaf to the pop of champagne corks. It is much that a merciful compensation gives me a sense of the dingier hue of Havanna,

and the muddier gurgle of beer. Are there potted meats? My physician has ordered me three pounds of minced salt-junk at every meal." There is such a thing, you know, as a ship's husband: X. is the ship's poor relation.

As I have said, he takes also a below-the-white-sugar interest in the jokes, laughing by precise point of compass, just as he would lay the ship's course, all *yawing* being out of the question with his scrupulous decorum at the helm. Once or twice I have got the better of him, and touched him off into a kind of compromised explosion, like that of damp fireworks, that splutter and simmer a little, and then go out with painful slowness and occasional relapses. But his fuse is always of the unwillingest, and you must blow your match, and touch him off again and again with the same joke. Or rather, you must magnetize him many times to get him *en rapport* with a jest. This once accomplished, you have him, and one bit of fun will last the whole voyage. He prefers those of one syllable, the *a-b abs* of humor. The gradual fattening of the steward, a benevolent mulatto with whiskers and ear-rings, who looks as if he had been meant for a woman, and had become a man by accident, as in some of those stories of the elder physiologists, is an abiding topic of humorous comment with Mr. X. "That 'ere st'oard," he says, with a brown grin like what you might fancy on the face of a serious and aged seal, "'s agittin' as fat 's a porpis. He was as thin 's a shingle when he come aboord last v'yge. Them trousis'll bust yit. He don't darst take 'em off nights, for the whole ship's company couldn't git him into 'em agin." And then he turns aside to enjoy the intensity of his emotion by himself, and you hear at intervals low rumblings, an indigestion of laughter. He tells me of St. Elmo's fires, Marvell's *corposants*, though with him the original *corpos santos* has suffered a sea change, and turned to *comepleasants*, pledges of fine weather. I shall not soon find a pleasanter companion. It is so delightful to meet a man who knows just what you do *not*. Nay, I think the tired mind finds something in plump ignorance like what the body feels in cushiony moss. Talk of the sympathy of kindred pursuits! It is the sympathy of the upper and nether millstones, both for ever grinding the same grist, and wearing each other smooth. One has not far to seek for book-nature, artist-nature, every variety of superinduced nature, in short, but

genuine human-nature is hard to find. And how good it is! Wholesome as a potato, fit company for any dish. The free-masonry of cultivated men is agreeable, but artificial, and I like better the natural grip with which manhood recognizes manhood.

X. has one good story, and with that I leave him, wishing him with all my heart that little inland farm at last which is his calenture as he paces the windy deck. One evening, when the clouds looked wild and whirling, I asked X. if it was coming on to blow. "No, I guess not," said he; "bumby the moon'll be up, and scoff away that 'ere loose stuff." His intonation set the phrase "scoff away" in quotation marks as plain as print. So I put a query in each eye, and he went on. "Ther' was a Dutch cappen onct, an' his mate come to him in the cabin, where he sot takin' his schnapps, an' says, 'Cappen, it's agittin' thick, an' looks kin' o' squally; hedn't we's good's shorten sail?' 'Gimme my alminick,' says the cappen. So he looks at it a spell, an' says he, 'The moon's due in less'n half an hour, an' she'll scoff away ev'ythin' clare agin.' So the mate he goes, an' bumby down he comes agin', an' says, 'Cappen, this 'ere's the allfiredest, powerfulest moon't ever you *did* see. She's scoffed away the maintogallants'l, an' she's to work on the foretops'l now. Guess you'd better look in the alminick agin, an' fin' out when *this* moon sets.' So the cappen thought 'twas 'bout time to go on deck. Dreadful slow them Dutch cappens be." And X. walked away, rumbling inwardly like the rote of the sea heard afar.

And so we arrived at Malta. Did you ever hear of one of those eating-houses where, for a certain fee, the guest has the right to make one thrust with a fork into a huge pot, in which the whole dinner is bubbling, getting perhaps a bit of boiled meat, or a potato, or else nothing? Well, when the great cauldron of war is seething, and the nations stand around it striving to fish out something to their purpose from the mess, Britannia always has a great advantage in her trident. Malta is one of the tit-bits she has impaled with that awful implement. I was not sorry for it, when I reached my clean inn, with its kindly English landlady.

EDGAR ALLEN POE 1809-1849

Poe's short and tragic life and his genius have been the subject of bitter controversy for years. His rank as a critic, as a short story writer, and as a lyric poet is now unquestioned. In American literature he stands apart, and he is perhaps the only one of the older American writers who is admired in intellectual Europe. The son of actor parents, he was adopted at an early age by John Allan, a wealthy gentleman of Richmond, who alternately petted and tyrannized him. Poe finally broke with his foster-father and settled in Baltimore, where he attempted to gain a living for himself and his young invalid wife by writing. As editor of several magazines he wrote his best criticisms. After the death of his wife he became more and more addicted to alcoholic excesses, which finally caused his death.

THE BLACK CAT

FOR the most wild, yet most homely narrative which I am about to pen, I neither expect nor solicit belief. Mad indeed would I be to expect it, in a case where my very senses reject their own evidence. Yet, mad am I not—and very surely do I not dream. But tomorrow I die, and today I would unburden my soul. My immediate purpose is to place before the world, plainly, succinctly, and without comment, a series of mere household events. In their consequences, these events have terrified—have tortured—have destroyed me. Yet I will not attempt to expound them. To me, they have presented little but Horror; to many they will seem less terrible than *baroques*. Hereafter, perhaps, some intellect may be found which will reduce my phantasm to the commonplace: some intellect more calm, more logical, and far less excitable than my own, which will perceive in the circumstances I detail with awe, nothing more than an ordinary succession of very natural causes and effects.

From my infancy I was noted for the docility and humanity of my disposition. My tenderness of heart was even so conspicuous as to make me the jest of my companions. I was especially fond of animals, and was indulged by my parents with a great variety of pets. With these I spent most of my time, and never was so happy as when feeding and caressing them. This peculiarity of character grew with my growth, and in my

manhood I derived from it one of my principal sources of pleasure. To those who have cherished an affection for a faithful and sagacious dog, I need hardly be at the trouble of explaining the nature or the intensity of the gratification thus derivable. There is something in the unselfish and self-sacrificing love of a brute which goes directly to the heart of him who has had frequent occasion to test the paltry friendship and gossamer fidelity of mere *Man*.

I married early, and was happy to find in my wife a disposition not uncongenial with my own. Observing my partiality for domestic pets, she lost no opportunity of procuring those of the most agreeable kind. We had birds, gold-fish, a fine dog, rabbits, a small monkey, and a *cat*.

This latter was a remarkably large and beautiful animal, entirely black, and sagacious to an astonishing degree. In speaking of his intelligence, my wife, who at heart was not a little tinctured with superstition, made frequent allusion to the ancient popular notion which regarded all black cats as witches in disguise. Not that she was ever *serious* upon this point—and I mention the matter at all for no better reason than that it happens, just now, to be remembered.

Pluto—this was the cat's name—was my favorite pet and playmate. I alone fed him, and he attended me wherever I went about the house. It was even with difficulty that I could prevent him from following me through the streets.

Our friendship lasted, in this manner, for several years, during which my general temperament and character, through the instrumentality of the Fiend Intemperance, had, (I blush to confess it) experienced a radical alteration for the worse. I grew, day by day, more moody, more irritable, more regardless of the feelings of others. I suffered myself to use intemperate language to my wife. At length, I even offered her personal violence. My pets, of course, were made to feel the change in my disposition. I not only neglected, but ill-used them. For Pluto, however, I still retained sufficient regard to restrain me from maltreating him, as I made no scruple of maltreating the rabbits, the monkey, or even the dog, when by accident, or through affection, they came in my way. But my disease grew upon me—for what disease is like Alcohol!—and at length even Pluto, who was now becoming old, and consequently somewhat peevish—

even Pluto began to experience the effects of my ill-temper.

One night, returning home, much intoxicated, from one of my haunts about town, I fancied that the cat avoided my presence. I seized him; when, in his fright at my violence, he inflicted a slight wound upon my hand with his teeth. The fury of a demon instantly possessed me. I knew myself no longer. My original soul seemed, at once, to take its flight from my body; and a more than fiendish malevolence, gin-nurtured, thrilled every fibre of my frame. I took from my waistcoat pocket a pen-knife, opened it, grasped the poor beast by the throat, and deliberately cut one of its eyes from the socket! I blush, I burn, I shudder, while I pen the damnable atrocity.

When reason returned with the morning—when I had slept off the fumes of the night's debauch—I experienced a sentiment half of horror, half of remorse, for the crime which I had been guilty; but it was, at best, a feeble and equivocal feeling, and the soul remained untouched. I again plunged into excess, and soon drowned in wine all memory of the deed.

In the meantime the cat slowly recovered. The socket of the lost eye presented, it is true, a frightful appearance, but he no longer appeared to suffer any pain. He went about the house as usual, but, as might be expected, fled in extreme terror at my approach. I had so much of my old heart left, as to be at first grieved by this evident dislike on the part of a creature which had once so loved me. But this feeling soon gave place to irritation. And then came, as if to my final and irrevocable overthrow, the spirit of PERVERSENESS. Of this spirit philosophy takes no account. Yet I am not more sure that my soul lives than I am that perverseness is one of the primitive impulses of the human heart: one of the indivisible primary faculties, or sentiments, which give direction to the character of Man. Who has not, a hundred times, found himself committing a vile or a silly action, for no other reason than because he knows he should *not?* Have we not a perpetual inclination, in the teeth of our best judgment, to violate that which is *Law*, merely because we understand it to be such? This spirit of perverseness, I say, came to my final overthrow. It was this unfathomable longing of the soul *to vex itself*—to offer violence to its own nature—to do wrong for the wrong's sake only—that urged me to continue and finally to consummate the injury I had inflicted upon

the unoffending brute. One morning, in cool blood, I slipped a noose about its neck and hung it to the limb of a tree; hung it with the tears streaming from my eyes, and with the bitterest remorse at my heart; hung it *because* I knew that it had loved me, and *because* I felt it had given me no reason of offense; hung it *because* I knew that in so doing I was committing a sin—a deadly sin that would so jeopardize my immortal soul as to place it, if such a thing were possible, even beyond the reach of the infinite mercy of the Most Merciful and Most Terrible God.

On the night of the day on which this cruel deed was done, I was aroused from sleep by the cry of fire. The curtains of my bed were in flames. The whole house was blazing. It was with great difficulty that my wife, a servant and myself made our escape from the conflagration. The destruction was complete. My entire worldly wealth was swallowed up, and I resigned myself thenceforward to despair.

I am above the weakness of seeking to establish a sequence of cause and effect, between the disaster and the atrocity. But I am detailing a chain of facts, and wish not to leave even a possible link imperfect. On the day succeeding the fire, I visited the ruins. The walls, with one exception, had fallen in. This exception was found in a compartment wall, not very thick, which stood about the middle of the house, and against which had rested the head of my bed. The plastering had here, in great measure, resisted the action of fire—a fact which I attributed to its having been recently spread. About this wall a dense crowd were collected, and many persons seemed to be examining a particular portion of it with very minute and eager attention. The words “strange!” “singular!” and other similar expressions, excited my curiosity. I approached and saw, as if graven in *bas relief* upon the white surface, the figure of a gigantic *cat*. The impression was given with an accuracy truly marvelous. There was a rope about the animal’s neck.

When I first beheld this apparition—for I could scarcely regard it as less—my wonder and my terror were extreme. But at length reflection came to my aid. The cat, I remembered, had been hung in a garden adjacent to the house. Upon the alarm of fire, this garden had been immediately filled by the crowd—by some one of whom the animal must have been cut from the tree and thrown, through an open window, into my chamber. This had

probably been done with the view of arousing me from sleep. The falling of other walls had compressed the victim of my cruelty into the substance of the freshly spread plaster ; the lime of which, with the flames, and the ammonia from the carcass, had then accomplished the portraiture as I saw it.

Although I thus readily accounted to my reason, if not altogether to my conscience, for the startling fact just detailed, it did not the less fail to make a deep impression upon my fancy. For months I could not rid myself of the phantasm of the cat ; and during this period there came back into my spirit a half-sentiment that seemed, but was not, remorse. I went so far as to regret the loss of the animal, and to look about me, among the vile haunts which I now habitually frequented, for another pet of the same species, and of somewhat similar appearance, with which to supply its place.

One night as I sat, half stupefied, in a den of more than infamy, my attention was suddenly drawn to some black object, reposing upon the head of one of the immense hogsheads of Gin, or of Rum, which constituted the chief furniture of the apartment. I had been looking steadily at the top of this hogshead for some minutes, and what now caused me surprise was the fact that I had not sooner perceived the object thereupon. I approached it and touched it with my hand. It was a black cat—a very large one—fully as large as Pluto, and closely resembling him in every respect but one. Pluto had not a white hair upon any portion of his body ; but this cat had a large, although indefinite splotch of white, covering nearly the whole region of the breast.

Upon my touching him, he immediately arose, purred loudly, rubbed against my hand, and appeared delighted with my notice. This, then, was the very creature of which I was in search. I at once offered to purchase it of the landlord ; but this person made no claim to it—knew nothing of it—had never seen it before.

I continued my caresses, and, when I prepared to go home, the animal evinced a disposition to accompany me. I permitted it to do so ; occasionally stooping and patting it as I proceeded. When it reached the house, it domesticated itself at once, and became immediately a great favorite with my wife.

For my own part, I soon found a dislike to it arising within me. This was just the reverse of what I had anticipated ; but—I

know not how or why it was—its evident fondness for myself rather disgusted and annoyed. By slow degrees, these feelings of disgust and annoyance rose into the bitterness of hatred, I avoided the creature; a certain sense of shame, and the remembrance of my former deed of cruelty, preventing me from physically abusing it. I did not, for some weeks, strike, or otherwise violently ill use it; but gradually—very gradually—I came to look upon it with unutterable loathing, and to flee silently from its odious presence, as from the breath of pestilence.

What added, no doubt, to my hatred of the beast, was the discovery, on the morning after I brought it home, that, like Pluto, it also had been deprived of one of its eyes. This circumstance, however, only endeared it to my wife, who, as I have already said, possessed, in a high degree, that humanity of feeling which had once been my distinguishing trait, and the source of many of my simplest and purest pleasures.

With my aversion to this cat, however, its partiality for myself seemed to increase. It followed my footsteps with a pertinacity which it would be difficult to make the reader comprehend. Whenever I sat, it would crouch beneath my chair, or spring upon my knees, covering me with its loathsome caresses. If I arose to walk, it would get between my feet and thus nearly throw me down, or, fastening its long and sharp claws in my dress, clamber, in this manner, to my breast. At such times, although I longed to destroy it with a blow, I was yet withheld from so doing, partly by a memory of my former crime, but chiefly—let me confess it at once—by absolute *dread* of the beast.

This dread was not exactly a dread of physical evil—and yet I should be at a loss how otherwise to define it. I am almost ashamed to own—yes, even in this felon's cell, I am almost ashamed to own—that the terror and horror with which the animal inspired me, had been heightened by one of the merest chimeras it would be possible to conceive. My wife had called my attention, more than once, to the character of the mark of white hair, of which I have spoken, and which constituted the sole visible difference between the strange beast and the one I had destroyed. The reader will remember that this mark, although large, had been originally very indefinite; but, by slow degrees—degrees nearly imperceptible, and which for a long time my Reason struggled to reject as fanciful—it had, at length, assumed

a rigorous distinctness of outline. It was now the representation of an object that I shudder to name; and for this, above all, I loathed, and dreaded, and would have rid myself of the monster *had I dared*; it was now, I say, the image of a hideous—of a ghastly thing—of the GALLows!—oh, mournful and terrible engine of Horror and of Crime, of Agony and of Death!

And now was I indeed wretched beyond the wretchedness of mere Humanity. And a brute beast—whose fellow I had contemptuously destroyed—a *brute beast* to work out for *me*—for me a man, fashioned in the image of the High God—so much of insufferable woe! Alas! neither by day nor by night knew I the blessing of Rest any more! During the former the creature left me no moment alone; and, in the latter, I started, hourly, from dreams of unutterable fear, to find the hot breath of *the thing* upon my face, and its vast weight—an incarnate Night-Mare that I had no power to shake off—incumbent eternally upon my *heart*!

Beneath the pressure of torments such as these, the feeble remnant of the good within me succumbed. Evil thoughts became my sole intimates—the darkest and most evil of thoughts. The moodiness of my usual temper increased to hatred of all things and of all mankind; while from the sudden, frequent, and ungovernable outbursts of a fury to which I now blindly abandoned myself, my uncomplaining wife, alas! was the most usual and the most patient of sufferers.

One day she accompanied me, upon some household errand, into the cellar of the old building which our poverty compelled us to inhabit. The cat followed me down the steep stairs, and, nearly throwing me headlong, exasperated me to madness. Uplifting an axe, and forgetting, in my wrath, the childish dread which had hitherto stayed my hand, I aimed a blow at the animal which, of course, would have proved instantly fatal had it descended as I wished. But this blow was arrested by the hand of my wife. Goaded, by the interference, into a rage more than demoniacal, I withdrew my arm from her grasp and buried the axe in her brain. She fell dead upon the spot, without a groan.

This hideous murder accomplished, I set myself forthwith, and with entire deliberation, to the task of concealing the body. I knew that I could not remove it from the house, either by day or by night, without the risk of being observed by the neighbors. Many projects entered my mind. At one period I thought of

cutting the corpse into minute fragments, and destroying them by fire. At another, I resolved to dig a grave for it in the floor of the cellar. Again, I deliberated about casting it in the well in the yard—about packing it in a box, as if merchandise, with the usual arrangements, and so getting a porter to take it from the house. Finally I hit upon what I considered a far better expedient than either of these. I determined to wall it up in the cellar—as the monks of the middle ages are recorded to have walled up their victims.

For a purpose such as this the cellar was well adapted. Its walls were loosely constructed, and had lately been plastered throughout with a rough plaster, which the dampness of the atmosphere had prevented from hardening. Moreover, in one of the walls was a projection, caused by a false chimney, or fireplace, that had been filled up, and made to resemble the rest of the cellar. I made no doubt that I could readily displace the bricks at this point, insert the corpse, and wall the whole up as before, so that no eye could detect anything suspicious.

And in this calculation I was not deceived. By means of a crow-bar I easily dislodged the bricks, and having carefully deposited the body against the inner wall, I propped it in that position, while, with little trouble, I relaid the whole structure as it originally stood. Having procured mortar, sand, and hair, with every possible precaution, I prepared a plaster which could not be distinguished from the old, and with this I very carefully went over the new brickwork. When I had finished, I felt satisfied that all was right. The wall did not present the slightest appearance of having been disturbed. The rubbish on the floor was picked up with the minutest care. I looked around triumphantly, and said to myself—"Here at least, then, my labor has not been in vain."

My next step was to look for the beast which had been the cause of so much wretchedness; for I had, at length, firmly resolved to put it to death. Had I been able to meet with it, at the moment, there could have been no doubt of its fate; but it appeared that the crafty animal had been alarmed at the violence of my previous anger, and forbore to present itself in my present mood. It is impossible to describe, or to imagine, the deep, the blissful sense of relief which the absence of the detested creature occasioned in my bosom. It did not make its appearance during

the night—and thus for one night at least, since its introduction into the house, I soundly and tranquilly slept; ay, *slept* even with the burden of murder upon my soul.

The second and third day passed, and still my tormentor came not. Once again I breathed as a free man. The monster, in terror, had fled the premises forever! I should behold it no more! My happiness was supreme! The guilt of my dark deed disturbed me but little. Some few inquiries had been made, but these had been readily answered. Even a search had been instituted—but of course nothing was to be discovered. I looked upon my future felicity as secured.

Upon the fourth day of the assassination, a party of the police came, very unexpectedly, into the house, and proceeded again to make rigorous investigation of the premises. Secure, however, in the inscrutability of my place of concealment, I felt no embarrassment whatever. The officers bade me accompany them in their search. They left no nook or corner unexplored. At length, for the third or fourth time, they descended into the cellar. I quivered not in a muscle. My heart beat calmly as that of one who slumbers in innocence. I walked the cellar from end to end. I folded my arms upon my bosom, and roamed easily to and fro. The police were thoroughly satisfied and prepared to depart. The glee at my heart was too strong to be restrained. I burned to say if but one word, by way of triumph, and to render doubly sure their assurance of my guiltlessness.

"Gentlemen," I said at last, as the party ascended the steps, "I delight to have allayed your suspicions. I wish you all health and a little more courtesy. By the bye, gentlemen, this—this is a very well constructed house." (In the rabid desire to say something easily, I scarcely knew what I uttered at all) "I may say an *excellently* well constructed house. These walls—are you going, gentlemen?—these walls are solidly put together;" and here, through the mere frenzy of bravado, I rapped heavily, with a cane which I held in my hand, upon that very portion of the brick-work behind which stood the corpse of the wife of my bosom.

But may God shield and deliver me from the fangs of the Arch-Fiend! No sooner had the reverberation of my blows sunk into silence, than I was answered by a voice from within the tomb!—by a cry, at first muffled and broken, like the sobbing of a child, and then quickly swelling into one long, loud, and continuous

scream, utterly anomalous and inhuman—a howl—a wailing shriek, half of horror and half of triumph, such as might have arisen only out of hell, conjointly from the throats of the damned in their agony and of the demons that exult in the damnation.

Of my own thoughts it is folly to speak. Swooning, I staggered to the opposite wall. For one instant the party upon the stairs remained motionless, through extremity of terror and of awe. In the next, a dozen stout arms were toiling at the wall. It fell bodily. The corpse, already greatly decayed and clotted with gore, stood erect before the eyes of the spectators. Upon its head, with red extended mouth and solitary eye of fire, sat the hideous beast whose craft had seduced me into murder, and whose informing voice had consigned me to the hangman. I had walled the monster up within the tomb!

THE MASQUE OF THE RED DEATH

THE “Red Death” had long devastated the country. No pestilence had ever been so fatal, or so hideous. Blood was its Avatar and its seal—the redness and the horror of blood. There were sharp pains, and sudden dizziness, and then profuse bleeding at the pores, with dissolution. The scarlet stains upon the body and especially upon the face of the victim, were the pest ban which shut him out from the aid and from the sympathy of his fellow-men. And the whole seizure, progress and termination of the disease, were the incidents of half an hour.

But the Prince Prospero was happy and dauntless and sagacious. When his dominions were half depopulated, he summoned to his presence a thousand hale and light-hearted friends from among the knights and dames of his court, and with these retired to the deep seclusion of one of his castellated abbeys. This was an extensive and magnificent structure, the creation of the prince’s own eccentric yet august taste. A strong and lofty wall girdled it in. This wall had gates of iron. The courtiers, having entered, brought furnaces and massy hammers and welded the bolts. They resolved to leave means neither of ingress nor egress to the sudden impulses of despair or of frenzy from within. The abbey was amply provisioned. With such precautions the courtiers might bid defiance to contagion. The external world could take care of itself. In the meantime it was folly to grieve, or to

think. The prince had provided all the appliances of pleasure. There were buffoons, there were improvisatori, there were ballet-dancers, there were musicians, there was Beauty, there was wine. All these and security were within. Without was the "Red Death."

It was toward the close of the fifth or sixth month of his seclusion, and while the pestilence still raged most furiously abroad, that the Prince Prospero entertained his thousand friends at a masked ball of the most unusual magnificence.

It was a voluptuous scene, that masquerade. But first let me tell of the rooms in which it was held. There were seven—an imperial suite. In many palaces, however, such suites form a long and straight vista, while the folding-doors slide back nearly to the walls on either hand, so that the view of the whole extent is scarcely impeded. Here the case was very different; as might have been expected from the prince's love of the *bizarre*. The apartments were so irregularly disposed that the vision embraced but little more than one at a time. There was a sharp turn at every twenty or thirty yards, and at each turn a novel effect. To the right and left, in the middle of each wall, a tall and narrow Gothic window looked out upon a closed corridor which pursued the windings of the suite. These windows were of stained glass whose color varied in accordance with the prevailing hue of the decorations of the chamber into which it opened. That at the eastern extremity was hung, for example, in blue—and vividly blue were its windows. The second chamber was purple in its ornaments and tapestries, and here the panes were purple. The third was green throughout, and so were the casements. The fourth was furnished and lighted with orange—the fifth with white—the sixth with violet. The seventh apartment was closely shrouded in black velvet tapestries that hung all over the ceiling and down the walls, falling in heavy folds upon a carpet of the same material and hue. But in this chamber only the color of the windows failed to correspond with the decorations. The panes here were scarlet—a deep blood color. Now in no one of the seven apartments was there any lamp or candelabrum, amid the profusion of golden ornaments that lay scattered to and fro or depended from the roof. There was no light of any kind emanating from lamp or candle within the suite of chambers. But in the corridors that followed the suite, there stood, opposite to each window, a heavy tripod, bear-

ing a brazier of fire that projected its rays through the tinted glass and so glaringly illuminated the room. And thus were produced a multitude of gaudy and fantastic appearances. But in the western or black chamber the effect of the firelight that streamed upon the dark hangings through the blood-tinted panes, was ghastly in the extreme, and produced so wild a look upon the countenances of those who entered, that there were few of the company bold enough to set foot within its precincts at all.

It was in this apartment, also, that there stood against the western wall, a gigantic clock of ebony. Its pendulum swung to and fro with a dull, heavy, monotonous clang; and when the minute-hand made the circuit of the face, and the hour was to be stricken, there came from the brazen lungs of the clock a sound which was clear and loud and deep and exceedingly musical, but of so peculiar a note and emphasis that, at each lapse of an hour, the musicians of the orchestra were constrained to pause, momentarily, in their performance, to hearken to the sound; and thus the waltzers perforce ceased their evolutions; and there was a brief disconcert of the whole gay company; and, while the chimes of the clock yet rang, it was observed that the giddiest grew pale, and the more aged and sedate passed their hands over their brows as if in confused reverie or meditation. But when the echoes had fully ceased, a light laughter at once pervaded the assembly; the musicians looked at each other and smiled as if at their own nervousness and folly, and made whispering vows, each to the other, that the next chiming of the clock should produce in them no similar emotion; and then after the lapse of sixty minutes (which embrace three thousand and six hundred seconds of the Time that flies), there came yet another chiming of the clock, and then were the same disconcert and tremulousness and meditation as before.

But, in spite of these things, it was a gay and magnificent revel. The tastes of the prince were peculiar. He had a fine eye for colors and effects. He disregarded the *decora* of mere fashion. His plans were bold and fiery, and his conceptions glowed with barbaric lustre. There are some who would have thought him mad. His followers felt that he was not. It was necessary to hear and see and touch him to be *sure* that he was not.

He had directed, in great part, the moveable embellishments of the seven chambers, upon occasion of this great *fête*; and it was

his own guiding taste which had given character to the masqueraders. Be sure they were grotesque. There were much glare and glitter and piquancy and phantasm—much of what has been since in “Hernani.” There were arabesque figures with unsuited limbs and appointments. There were delirious fancies such as the madman fashions. There was much of the beautiful, much of the wanton, much of the *bizarre*, something of the terrible, and not a little of that which might have excited disgust. To and fro in the seven chambers there stalked, in fact, a multitude of dreams. And these—the dreams—writhed in and about, taking hue from the rooms, and causing the wild music of the orchestra to seem as the echo of their steps. And, anon, there strikes the ebony clock which stands in the hall of the velvet. And then, for a moment, all is still, and all is silent save the voice of the clock. The dreams are stiff-frozen as they stand. But the echoes of the chime die away—they have endured but an instant—and a light, half-subdued laughter floats after them as they depart. And now again, the music swells, and the dreams live, and writhe to and fro more merrily than ever, taking hue from the many-tinted windows through which stream the rays from the tripods. But to the chamber which lies most west-wardly of the seven, there are none of the maskers who venture; for the night is waning away; and there flows a ruddier light through the blood-colored panes; and the blackness of the sable drapery appalls; and to him whose foot falls upon the sable carpet, there comes from the near block of ebony a muffled peal more solemnly emphatic than any which reaches *their* ears who indulge in the more remote gaieties of the other apartments.

But these other apartments were densely crowded, and in them beat feverishly the heart of life. And the revel went whirlingly on, until at length there commenced the sounding of midnight upon the clock. And then the music ceased, as I have told; and the evolutions of the waltzers were quieted; and there was an uneasy cessation of all things as before. But now there were twelve strokes to be sounded by the bell of the clock; and thus it happened, perhaps, that more of thought crept, with more of time, into the meditations of the thoughtful among those who revelled. And thus, too, it happened, perhaps, that before the last echoes of the last chime had utterly sung into silence, there were many individuals in the crowd who had found leisure to become

aware of the presence of a masked figure which had arrested the attention of no single individual before. And the rumor of this new presence having spread itself whisperingly around, there arose at length from the whole company a buzz, or murmur, expressive of disapprobation and surprise—then, finally, of terror, of horror, and of disgust.

In an assembly of phantasms such as I have painted, it may well be supposed that no ordinary appearance could have excited such sensation. In truth the masquerade license of the night was nearly unlimited; but the figure in question had out-Heroded Herod, and gone beyond the bounds of even the prince's indefinite decorum. There are chords in the hearts of the most reckless which cannot be touched without emotion. Even with the utterly lost, to whom life and death are equally jests, there are matters of which no jest can be made. The whole company, indeed, seemed now deeply to feel that in the costume and bearing of the stranger neither wit nor propriety existed. The figure was tall and gaunt, and shrouded from head to foot in the habiliments of the grave. The mask which concealed the visage was made so nearly to resemble the countenance of a stiffened corpse that the closest scrutiny must have had difficulty in detecting the cheat. And yet all this might have been endured, if not approved, by the mad revellers around. But the mummer had gone so far as to assume the type of the Red Death. His vesture was dabbed in *blood*—and his broad brow, with all the features of the face, was besprinkled with the scarlet horror.

When the eyes of Prince Prospero fell upon this spectral image (which with a slow and solemn movement, as if more fully to sustain its *rôle*, stalked to and fro among the waltzers) he was seen to be convulsed, in the first moment with a strong shudder either of terror or distaste; but, in the next, his brow reddened with rage.

"Who dares?" he demanded hoarsely of the courtiers who stood near him—"who dares insult us with this blasphemous mockery? Seize him and unmask him—that we may know whom we have to hang at sunrise, from the battlements!"

It was the eastern or blue chamber in which stood the Prince Prospero as he uttered these words. They rang throughout the seven rooms loudly and clearly—for the prince was a bold and robust man, and the music had become hushed at the waving of his hand.

It was in the blue room where stood the prince, with a group of pale courtiers by his side. At first, as he spoke, there was a slight rushing movement of this group in the direction of the intruder, who at the moment, was also near at hand, and now, with deliberate and stately step, made closer approach to the speaker. But from a certain nameless awe with which the mad assumptions of the mummer had inspired the whole party, there were found none who put forth hand to seize him; so that, unimpeded, he passed within a yard of the prince's person; and, while the vast assembly, as if with one impulse, shrank from the centers of the rooms to the walls, he made his way uninterruptedly, but with the same solemn and measured step which had distinguished him from the first, through the blue chamber to the purple—through the purple to the green—through the green to the orange—through this again to the white—and even thence to the violet, ere a decided movement had been made to arrest him. It was then, however, that the Prince Prospero, maddening with rage and the shame of his own momentary cowardice, rushed hurriedly through the six chambers, while none followed him on account of the deadly terror that had seized upon all. He bore aloft a drawn dagger, and had approached, in rapid impetuosity, to within three or four feet of the retreating figure, when the latter, having attained the extremity of the velvet apartment, turned suddenly and confronted his pursuer. There was a sharp cry—and the dagger dropped gleaming upon the sable carpet, upon which, instantly afterwards, fell prostrate in death the Prince Prospero. Then, summoning the wild courage of despair, a throng of the revellers at once threw themselves into the black apartment, and, seizing the mummer, whose tall figure stood erect and motionless within the shadow of the ebony clock, gasped in unutterable horror at finding the grave-cerements and corpse-like mask which they handled with so violent a rudeness, untenanted by any tangible form.

And now was acknowledged the presence of the Red Death. He had come like a thief in the night. And one by one dropped the revellers in the blood-bedewed halls of their revel, and died each in the despairing posture of his fall. And the life of the ebony clock went out with that of the last of the gay. And the flames of the tripods expired. And Darkness and Decay and the Red Death held illimitable dominion over all.

HENRY DAVID THOREAU

1817-1862

Born at Concord, Massachusetts, and spent most of his life there. Educated at Harvard. Was successively teacher, lecturer, surveyor, carpenter, tutor of Emerson's children, and pencil-maker. In 1854 he built a hut in the woods by Walden Pond and lived there alone for two years—the experiment from which resulted his most famous work, "Walden." He was a strong individualist, and in some respects a disciple of Emerson. His prose has a certain vital quality which makes him distinguished in American literature.

THE LANDLORD

UNDER the one word, house, are included the school-house, the alms-house, the jail, the tavern, the dwelling-house; and the meanest shed or cave in which men live contains the elements of all these. But nowhere on the earth stands the entire and perfect house. The Parthenon, St. Peter's, the Gothic minster, the palace, the hovel, are but imperfect executions of an imperfect idea. Who would dwell in them? Perhaps to the eye of the gods, the cottage is more holy than the Parthenon, for they look down with no especial favor upon the shrines formally dedicated to them, and that should be the most sacred roof which shelters most of humanity. Surely, then, the gods who are most interested in the human race preside over the Tavern, where especially men congregate. Methinks I see the thousand shrines erected to Hospitality shining afar in all countries, as well Mahometan and Jewish, as Christian, khans, and caravansaries, and inns, whither all pilgrims without distinction resort.

Likewise we look in vain, east or west over the earth, to find the perfect man; but each represents only some particular excellence. The Landlord is a man of more open and general sympathies, who possesses a spirit of hospitality which is its own reward, and feeds and shelters men from pure love of the creatures. To be sure, this profession is as often filled by imperfect characters, and such as have sought it from unworthy motives, as any other, but so much the more should we prize the true and honest Landlord when we meet with him.

Who has not imagined to himself a country inn, where the traveller shall really feel *in*, and at home, and at his public-house, who was before at his private house; whose host is indeed a *host*, and a *lord* of the *land*, a self-appointed brother of his race; called to his place, beside, by all the winds of heaven and his good genius, as truly as the preacher is called to preach; a man of such universal sympathies, and so broad and genial a human nature, that he would fain sacrifice the tender but narrow ties of private friendship, to a broad, sunshiny, fair-weather-and-foul friendship for his race; who loves men, not as a philosopher, with philanthropy, nor as an overseer of the poor, with charity, but by a necessity of his nature, as he loves dogs and horses; and standing at his open door from morning till night, would fain see more and more of them come, along the highway, and is never satiated. To him the sun and moon are but travellers, the one by day and the other by night; and they too patronize his house. To his imagination all things travel save his sign-post and himself; and though you may be his neighbor for years, he will show you only the civilities of the road. But on the other hand, while nations and individuals are alike selfish and exclusive, he loves all men equally; and if he treats his nearest neighbor as a stranger, since he has invited all nations to share his hospitality, the farthest travelled is in some measure kindred to him who takes him into the bosom of his family.

He keeps a house of entertainment at the sign of the Black Horse or the Spread Eagle, and is known far and wide, and his fame travels with increasing radius every year. All the neighborhood is in his interest, and if the traveller ask how far to a tavern, he receives some such answer as this: "Well, sir, there's a house about three miles from here, where they haven't taken down their sign yet; but it's only ten miles to Slocum's, and that's a capital house, both for man and beast." At three miles he passes a cheerless barrack, standing desolate behind its sign-post, neither public nor private, and has glimpses of a discontented couple who have mistaken their calling. At ten miles see where the Tavern stands,—really an *entertaining* prospect,—so public and inviting that only the rain and snow do not enter. It is no gay pavilion, made of bright stuffs, and furnished with nuts and gingerbread, but as plain and sincere as a caravansary: located in no Tarrytown, where you receive only the civilities of

commerce, but far in the fields it exercises a primitive hospitality, amid the fresh scent of new hay and raspberries, if it be summer time, and the tinkling of cow-bells from invisible pastures; for it is a land flowing with milk and honey, and the newest milk courses in a broad, deep stream across the premises.

In these retired places the tavern is first of all a house—elsewhere, last of all, or never,—and warms and shelters its inhabitants. It is as simple and sincere in its essentials as the caves in which the first men dwelt, but it is also as open and public. The traveller steps across the threshold, and lo! he too is master, for he only can be called proprietor of the house here who behaves with most propriety in it. The Landlord stands clear back in nature, to my imagination, with his axe and spade felling trees and raising potatoes with the vigor of a pioneer; with Promethean energy making nature yield her increase to supply the wants of so many; and he is not so exhausted, nor of so short a stride, but that he comes forward even to the highway to this wide hospitality and publicity. Surely, he has solved some of the problems of life. He comes in at his backdoor, holding a log fresh cut for the hearth upon his shoulder with one hand, while he greets the newly arrived traveller with the other.

Here at length we have free range, as not in palaces, nor cottages, nor temples, and intrude nowhere. All the secrets of housekeeping are exhibited to the eyes of men, above and below, before and behind. This is the necessary way to live, men have confessed, in these days, and shall he skulk and hide? And why should we have any serious disgust at kitchens? Perhaps they are the holiest recess of the house. There is the hearth, after all,—and the settle, and the fagots, and the kettle, and the crickets. We have pleasant reminiscences of these. They are the heart, the left ventricle, the very vital part of the house. Here the real and sincere life which we meet in the streets was actually fed and sheltered. Here burns the taper that cheers the lonely traveller by night, and from this hearth ascend the smokes that populate the valley to his eyes by day. On the whole, a man may not be so little ashamed of any other part of his house, for here is his sincerity and earnest, at least. It may not be here that the besoms are plied most,—it is not here that they need to be, for dust will not settle on the kitchen floor more than in nature.

Hence it will not do for the Landlord to possess too fine a nature. He must have health above the common accidents of life, subject to no modern fashionable diseases; but no taste, rather a vast relish or appetite. His sentiments on all subjects will be delivered as freely as the wind blows; there is nothing private or individual in them, though still original, but they are public, and of the hue of the heavens over his house,—a certain out-of-door obviousness and transparency not to be disputed. What he does, his manners are not to be complained of, though abstractly offensive, for it is what man does, and in him the race is exhibited. When he eats, he is liver and bowels, and the whole digestive apparatus to the company, and so all admit the thing is done. He must have no idiosyncrasies, no particular bents or tendencies to this or that, but a general, uniform, and healthy development, such as his portly person indicates, offering himself equally on all sides to men. He is not one of your peaked and inhospitable men of genius, with particular tastes, but, as we said before, has one uniform relish, and taste which never aspires higher than a tavern-sign, or the cut of a weather-cock. The man of genius, like a dog with a bone, or the slave who has swallowed a diamond, or a patient with the gravel, sits afar and retired, off the road, hangs out no sign of refreshment for man and beast, but says, by all possible hints and signs, I wish to be alone—good-by—farewell. But the landlord can afford to live without privacy. He entertains no private thought, he cherishes no solitary hour, no Sabbath day, but thinks,—enough to assert the dignity of reason,—and talks, and reads the newspaper. What he does not tell to one traveller, he tells to another. He never wants to be alone, but sleeps, wakes, eats, drinks, sociably, still remembering his race. He walks abroad through the thoughts of men, and the Iliad and Shakspeare are tame to him, who hears the rude but homely incidents of the road from every traveller. The mail might drive through his brain in the midst of his most lonely soliloquy, without disturbing his equanimity, provided it brought plenty of news and passengers. There can be no *pro*-fanity where there is no fane behind, and the whole world may see quite round him. Perchance his lines have fallen to him in dustier places, and he has heroically sat down where two roads meet, or at the Four Corners, or the Five Points, and his life is sublimely trivial for the good of men. The dust of travel

blows ever in his eyes, and they preserve their clear, complacent look. The hourlies and half-hourlies, the dailies and weeklies, whirl on well-worn tracks, round and round his house, as if it were the goal in the stadium, and still he sits within in unruffled serenity, with no show of retreat. His neighbor dwells timidly behind a screen of poplars and willows, and a fence with sheaves of spears at regular intervals, or defended against the tender palms of visitors by sharp spikes,—but the traveller's wheels rattle over the door-step of the tavern, and he cracks his whip in the entry. He is truly glad to see you, and sincere as the bull's-eye over his door. The traveller seeks to find, wherever he goes, some one who will stand in this broad and catholic relation to him, who will be an inhabitant of the land to him a stranger, and represent its human nature, as the rock stands for its inanimate nature; and this is he. As his crib furnishes provender for the traveller's horse, and his larder provisions for his appetite, so his conversation furnishes the necessary aliment to his spirits. He knows very well what a man wants, for he is a man himself, and as it were the farthest travelled, though he has never stirred from his door. He understands his needs and destiny. He would be well fed and lodged, there can be no doubt, and have the transient sympathy of a cheerful companion, and of a heart which always prophesies fair weather. And after all the greatest men, even, want much more the sympathy which every honest fellow can give, than that which the great only can impart. If he is not the most upright, let us allow him this praise, that he is the most downright of men. He has a hand to shake and to be shaken, and takes a sturdy and unquestionable interest in you, as if he had assumed the care of you, but if you will break your neck, he will even give you the best advice as to the method.

The great poets have not been ungrateful to their landlords. Mine host of the Tabard Inn, in the Prologue to the Canterbury Tales, was an honor to his profession:—

"A semely man our Hoste was, with alle,
For to han been an marshal in an halle.
A large man he was, with eyen stepe;
A fairer burgeis is ther non in Chepe:
Bold of speche, and wise, and well ytaught,
And of manhood him lacked righte naught.

Eke thereto, was he right a mery man,
 And after souper plaien he began,
 And spake of mirthe amonges other thinges,
 Whan that we hadden made our reckoninges."

He is the true house-band, and centre of the company—of greater fellowship and practical social talent than any. He it is that proposes that each shall tell a tale to while away the time to Canterbury, and leads them himself, and concludes with his own tale:—

"Now, by my father's soule that is ded,
 But ye be mery, smiteth of my hed:
 Hold up your hondes withoutten more speche."

If we do not look up to the Landlord, we look round for him in all emergencies, for he is a man of infinite experience, who unites hands with wit. He is a more public character than a statesman,—a publican, and not consequently a sinner; and surely, he, if any, should be exempted from taxation and military duty.

Talking with our host is next best and instructive to talking with one's self. It is a more conscious soliloquy; as it were, to speak generally, and try what we would say provided we had an audience. He has indulgent and open ears, and does not require petty and particular statements. "Heigho!" exclaims the traveller. Them's my sentiments, thinks mine host, and stands ready for what may come next, expressing the purest sympathy by his demeanor. "Hot as blazes!" says the other,—"Hard weather, sir,—not much stirring nowadays," says he. He is wiser than to contradict his guest in any case; he lets him go on, he lets him travel.

The latest sitter leaves him standing far in the night, prepared to live right on, while suns rise and set, and his "good night" has as brisk a sound as his "good morning;" and the earliest riser finds him tasting his liquors in the bar ere flies begin to buzz, with a countenance fresh as the morning star over the sanded floor,—and not as one who had watched all night for travellers. And yet, if beds be the subject of conversation, it will appear that no man has been a sounder sleeper in his time.

Finally, as for his moral character, we do not hesitate to say, that he has no grain of vice or meanness in him, but represents

just that degree of virtue which all men relish without being obliged to respect. He is a good man, as his bitters are good,—an unquestionable goodness. Not what is called a good man,—good to be considered, as a work of art in galleries and museums,—but a good fellow, that is, good to be associated with. Who ever thought of the religion of an innkeeper—whether he was joined to the Church, partook of the sacrament, said his prayers, feared God, or the like? No doubt he has had his experiences, has felt a change, and is a firm believer in the perseverance of the saints. In this last, we suspect, does the peculiarity of his religion consist. But he keeps an inn, and not a conscience. How many fragrant charities and sincere social virtues are implied in this daily offering of himself to the public. He cherishes good will to all, and gives the wayfarer as good and honest advice to direct him on his road as the priest.

To conclude, the tavern will compare favorably with the church. The church is the place where prayers and sermons are delivered, but the tavern is where they are to take effect, and if the former are good, the latter cannot be bad.

GEORGE WASHINGTON

1732-1799

The "Father of his Country" and the first president of the United States, while a writer only on occasion, possessed a style worthy of a cultured gentleman. His state papers bespeak deep thought and deliberation, and are characterized by force and clarity of diction. His private correspondence is interesting in that it shows us the man as he was, though as literature it is negligible.

FIRST INAUGURAL ADDRESS

FELLOW-CITIZENS: Among the vicissitudes incident to life, no event could have filled me with greater anxieties, than that of which the notification was transmitted by your order, and received on the 14th day of the present month. On the one hand, I was summoned by my country, whose voice I can never hear but with veneration and love, from a retreat which I had chosen with the fondest predilection, and, in my flattering hopes, with an immutable decision, as the asylum of my declining years; a retreat which was rendered every day more necessary as well as more dear to me, by the addition of habit to inclination, and of frequent interruptions in my health to the gradual waste committed on it by time. On the other hand, the magnitude and difficulty of the trust, to which the voice of my country called me, being sufficient to awaken in the wisest and most experienced of her citizens a distrustful scrutiny into his qualifications, could not but overwhelm with despondence one, who, inheriting inferior endowments from nature, and unpracticed in the duties of civil administration, ought to be peculiarly conscious of his own deficiencies. In this conflict of emotions, all I dare aver is, that it has been my faithful study to collect my duty from a just appreciation of every circumstance by which it might be affected. All I dare hope is, that, if in executing this task, I have been too much swayed by a grateful remembrance of former instances, or by an affectionate sensibility to this transcendent proof of the confidence of my fellow-citizens; and have thence too little consulted my incapacity as well as disinclination for the weighty and untried cares before me; my error will be palliated by the

raotives which misled me, and its consequences be judged by my country with some share of the partiality in which they originated.

Such being the impressions under which I have, in obedience to the public summons, repaired to the present station, it would be peculiarly improper to omit, in this first official act, my fervent supplications to that Almighty Being, who rules over the universe, who presides in the councils of nations, and whose providential aids can supply every human defect, that his benediction may consecrate to the liberties and happiness of the people of the United States a government instituted by themselves for these essential purposes, and may enable every instrument employed in its administration to execute with success the functions allotted to his charge. In tendering this homage to the great Author of every public and private good, I assure myself that it expresses your sentiments not less than my own; nor those of my fellow-citizens at large, less than either. No people can be bound to acknowledge and adore the invisible hand, which conducts the affairs of men, more than the people of the United States. Every step, by which they have advanced to the character of an independent nation, seems to have been distinguished by some token of providential agency. And, in the important revolution just accomplished in the system of their united government, the tranquil deliberations and voluntary consent of so many distinct communities, from which the event has resulted, cannot be compared with the means by which most governments have been established, without some return of pious gratitude along with an humble anticipation of the future blessings which the past seems to presage. These reflections, arising out of the present crisis, have forced themselves too strongly on my mind to be suppressed. You will join with me, I trust, in thinking that there are none, under the influence of which the proceedings of a new and free government can more auspiciously commence.

By the article establishing the executive department, it is made the duty of the President "to recommend to your consideration such measures as he shall judge necessary and expedient." The circumstances, under which I now meet you, will acquit me from entering into that subject farther than to refer you to the great constitutional charter under which we are assembled; and which, in defining your powers, designates the objects to which your

attention is to be given. It will be more consistent with those circumstances, and far more congenial with the feelings which actuate me, to substitute, in place of a recommendation of particular measures, the tribute that is due to the talents, the rectitude, and the patriotism, which adorn the characters selected to devise and adopt them. In these honorable qualifications I behold the surest pledges, that as, on one side, no local prejudices or attachments, no separate views or party animosities, will misdirect the comprehensive and equal eye, which ought to watch over this great assemblage of communities and interests; so, on another, that the foundations of our national policy will be laid in the pure and immutable principles of private morality, and the preëminence of a free government be exemplified by all the attributes, which can win the affections of its citizens, and command the respect of the world.

I dwell on this prospect with every satisfaction, which an ardent love for my country can inspire; since there is no truth more thoroughly established, than that there exists in the economy and course of nature an indissoluble union between virtue and happiness, between duty and advantage, between the genuine maxims of an honest and magnanimous policy, and the solid rewards of public prosperity and felicity; since we ought to be no less persuaded that the propitious smiles of Heaven can never be expected on a nation that disregards the eternal rules of order and right, which Heaven itself has ordained; and since the preservation of the sacred fire of liberty, and the destiny of the republican model of government, are justly considered as *deeply*, perhaps as *finally* staked on the experiment intrusted to the hands of the American people.

Besides the ordinary objects submitted to your care, it will remain with your judgment to decide, how far an exercise of the occasional power delegated by the fifth article of the Constitution is rendered expedient at the present juncture by the nature of objections which have been urged against the system, or by the degree of inquietude which has given birth to them. Instead of undertaking particular recommendations on this subject, in which I could be guided by no lights derived from official opportunities, I shall again give way to my entire confidence in your discernment and pursuit of the public good; for I assure myself, that, whilst you carefully avoid every alteration, which might

endanger the benefits of a united and effective government, or which ought to await the future lessons of experience, a reverence for the characteristic rights of freemen, and a regard for the public harmony, will sufficiently influence your deliberations on the question, how far the former can be more impregnably fortified, or the latter be safely and advantageously promoted.

To the preceding observations I have one to add, which will be most properly addressed to the House of Representatives. It concerns myself, and will therefore be as brief as possible. When I was first honored with a call into the service of my country, then on the eve of an arduous struggle for its liberties, the light in which I contemplated my duty required, that I should renounce every pecuniary compensation. From this resolution I have in no instance departed. And being still under the impressions which produced it, I must decline as inapplicable to myself any share in the personal emoluments, which may be indispensably included in a permanent provision for the executive department; and must accordingly pray, that the pecuniary estimates for the station in which I am placed may, during my continuance in it, be limited to such actual expenditures as the public good may be thought to require.

Having thus imparted to you my sentiments, as they have been awakened by the occasion which brings us together, I shall take my present leave; but not without resorting once more to the benign Parent of the human race, in humble supplication, that, since he has been pleased to favor the American people with opportunities for deliberating in perfect tranquillity, and dispositions for deciding with unparalleled unanimity on a form of government for the security of their union and the advancement of their happiness; so his divine blessing may be equally *conspicuous* in the enlarged views, the temperate consultations, and the wise measures, on which the success of this government must depend.

WALT WHITMAN

1819-1892

The first aggressively American figure in American literature. He spent his early childhood on his father's Long Island farm, moving later to Brooklyn, where he learned to love the noise and the crowds of the city streets. His education was scant. He worked at various trades, and finally became editor of a small newspaper. He was something of a vagabond by nature, and took long walking trips through the Great Lakes district and down the Mississippi. Meantime he wrote indifferent poems and sketches for newspapers. In 1855 he published "Leaves of Grass," which marks the beginning of a new trail in literature. During the civil war he devoted himself to hospital service. His later years were troubled by sickness and poverty. He died at Camden, New Jersey. "Leaves of Grass," his only important work, is now recognized at its true worth. For originality and sheer power Whitman stands alone.

PREFACES TO "LEAVES OF GRASS"

AMERICA does not repel the past, or what the past has produced under its forms, or amid other politics, or the idea of castes, or the old religions—accepts the lesson with calmness—is not impatient because the slough still sticks to opinions and manners in literature, while the life which served its requirements has passed into the new life of the new forms—perceives that the corpse is slowly borne from the eating and sleeping rooms of the house—perceives that it waits a little while in the door—that it was fittest for its days—that its action has descended to the stalwart and well-shaped heir who approaches—and that he shall be fittest for his days.

The Americans of all nations at any time upon the earth, have probably the fullest poetical nature. The United States themselves are essentially the greatest poem. In the history of the earth hitherto, the largest and most stirring appear tame and orderly to their ampler largeness and stir. Here at last is something in the doings of man that corresponds with the broadcast doings of the day and night. Here is action untied from strings, necessarily blind to particulars and details, magnificently moving in masses. Here is the hospitality which forever indicates heroes. Here the performance, disdaining the trivial, unapproach'd in the tremendous audacity of its crowds and groupings, and the

push of its perspective, spreads with crampless and flowing breadth, and showers its prolific and splendid extravagance. One sees it must indeed own the riches of the summer and winter, and need never be bankrupt while corn grows from the ground, or the orchards drop apples, or the bays contain fish, or men beget children upon women.

Other states indicate themselves in their deputies—but the genius of the United States is not best or most in its executives or legislatures, nor in its ambassadors, or authors, or colleges or churches or parlors, nor even in its newspapers or inventors—but always most in the common people, south, north, west, east, in all its States, through all its mighty amplitude. The largeness of the nation, however, were monstrous without a corresponding largeness and generosity of the spirit of the citizen. Not swarming states, nor streets and steamships, nor prosperous business, nor farm, nor capital, nor learning, may suffice for the ideal of man—nor suffice the poet. No reminiscences may suffice either. A live nation can always cut a deep mark, and can have the best authority the cheapest—namely, from its own soul. This is the sum of the profitable uses of individuals or states, and of present action and grandeur, and of the subjects of poets. (As if it were necessary to trot back generation after generation to the eastern records! As if the beauty and sacredness of the demonstrable must fall behind that of the mythical! As if men do not make their mark out of any times! As if the opening of the western continent by discovery, and what has transpired in North and South America, were less than the small theatre of the antique, or the aimless sleep-walking of the middle ages!) The pride of the United States leaves the wealth and finesse of the cities, and all returns of commerce and agriculture, and all the magnitude of geography or shows of exterior victory, to enjoy the sight and realization of full-sized men, or one full-sized man unconquerable and simple.

The American poets are to enclose old and new, for America is the race of races. The expression of the American poet is to be transcendent and new. It is to be indirect, and not direct or descriptive or epic. Its quality goes through these to much more. Let the age and wars of other nations be chanted, and their eras and characters be illustrated, and that finish the verse. Not so the great psalm of the republic. Here the theme is

creative, and has vista. Whatever stagnates in the flat of custom or obedience or legislation, the great poet never stagnates. Obedience does not master him, he masters it. High up out of reach he stands, turning a concentrated light—he turns the pivot with his finger—he baffles the swiftest runners as he stands, and easily overtakes and envelopes them. The time straying toward infidelity and confections and persiflage he withholds by steady faith. Faith is the antiseptic of the soul—it pervades the common people and preserves them—they never give up believing and expecting and trusting. There is that indescribable freshness and unconsciousness about an illiterate person, that humbles and mocks the power of the noblest expressive genius. The poet sees for a certainty how one not a great artist may be just as sacred and perfect as the greatest artist.

The power to destroy or remould is freely used by the greatest poet, but seldom the power of attack. What is past, is past. If he does not expose superior models, and prove himself by every step he takes, he is not what is wanted. The presence of the great poet conquers—not parleying, or struggling, or any prepared attempts. Now he has passed that way, see after him! There is not left any vestige of despair, or misanthropy, or cunning, or exclusiveness, or the ignominy of a nativity or color, or delusion of hell or the necessity of hell—and no man thence-forward shall be degraded for ignorance or weakness or sin. The greatest poet hardly knows pettiness or triviality. If he breathes into anything that was before thought small, it dilates with the grandeur and life of the universe. He is a seer—he is individual—he is complete in himself—the others are as good as he, only he sees it, and they do not. He is not one of the chorus—he does not stop for any regulation—he is the president of regulation. What the eyesight does to the rest, he does to the rest. Who knows the curious mystery of the eyesight? The other senses corroborate themselves, but this is removed from any proof but its own, and foreruns the identities of the spiritual world. A single glance of it mocks all the investigations of man, and all the instruments and books of the earth, and all reasoning. What is marvelous? what is unlikely? what is impossible or baseless or vague—after you have once just open'd the space of a peach-pit, and given audience to far and near, and to the sunset, and had all things enter with electric swiftness, softly

and duly, without confusion or jostling or jam?

The land and sea, the animals, fishes and birds, the sky of heaven and the orbs, the forests, mountains and rivers, are not small themes—but folks expect of the poet to indicate more than the beauty and dignity which always attach to dumb real objects—they expect him to indicate the path between reality and their souls. Men and women perceive the beauty well enough—probably as well as he. The passionate tenacity of hunters, woodmen, early risers, cultivators of gardens and orchards and fields, the love of healthy women for the manly form, seafaring persons, drivers of horses, the passion for light and the open air, all is an old varied sign of the unfailing perception of beauty, and of a residence of the poetic in out-door people. They can never be assisted by poets to perceive—some may, but they never can. The poetic quality is not marshal'd in rhyme or uniformity, or abstract addresses to things, nor in melancholy complaints or good precepts, but is the life of these and much else, and is in the soul. The profit of rhyme is that it drops seeds of a sweeter and more luxuriant rhyme, and of uniformity that it conveys itself into its own roots in the ground out of sight. The rhyme and uniformity of perfect poems show the free growth of metrical laws, and bud from them as unerringly and loosely as lilacs and roses on a bush, and take shapes as compact as the shapes of chestnuts and oranges, and melons and pears, and shed the perfume impalpable to form. The fluency and ornaments of the finest poems or music or orations or recitations, are not independent but dependent. All beauty comes from beautiful blood and a beautiful brain. If the greatnesses are in conjunction in a man or woman, it is enough—the fact will prevail through the universe; but the gaggery and gilt of a million years will not prevail. Who troubles himself about his ornaments or fluency is lost. This is what you shall do: Love the earth and sun and the animals, despise riches, give alms to everyone that asks, stand up for the stupid and crazy, devote your income and labor to others, hate tyrants, argue not concerning God, have patience and indulgence toward the people, take off your hat to nothing known or unknown, or to any man or number of men—go freely with powerful uneducated persons, and with the young, and with the mothers of families—re-examine all you have been told in school or church or in any book, and dismiss whatever

insults your own soul; and your very flesh shall be a great poem, and have the richest fluency, not only in its words, but in the silent lines of its lips and face, and between the lashes of your eyes, and in every motion and joint of your body. The poet shall not spend his time in unneeded work. He shall know that the ground is already plough'd and manured; others may not know it, but he shall. He shall go directly to the creation. His trust shall master the trust of everything he touches—and shall master all attachment.

The known universe has one complete lover, and that is the greatest poet. He consumes an eternal passion, and is indifferent which chance happens, and which possible contingency of fortune or misfortune, and persuades daily and hourly his delicious pay. What balks or breaks others is fuel for his burning progress to contact and amorous joy. Other proportions of the reception of pleasure dwindle to nothing to his proportions. All expected from heaven or from the highest, he is rapport with in the sight of the daybreak, or the scenes of the winter woods, or the presence of children playing, or with his arm round the neck of a man or woman. His love above all love has leisure and expanse—he leaves room ahead of himself. He is no irresolute or suspicious lover—he is sure—he scorns intervals. His experience and the showers and thrills are not for nothing. Nothing can jar him—suffering and darkness cannot—death and fear cannot. To him complaint and jealousy and envy are corpses buried and rotten in the earth—he saw them buried. The sea is not surer of the shore, or the shore of the sea, than he is the fruition of his love, and of all perfection and beauty.

The fruition of beauty is no chance of miss or hit—it is as inevitable as life—it is exact and plumb as gravitation. From the eyesight proceeds another eyesight, and from the hearing proceeds another hearing, and from the voice proceeds another voice, eternally curious of the harmony of things with man. These understand the law of perfection in masses and floods—that it is the profuse and impartial—that there is not a minute of the light or dark, nor an acre of the earth and sea, without it—nor any direction of the sky, nor any trade or employment, nor any turn of events. This is the reason that about the proper expression of beauty there is precision and balance. One part does not need to be thrust above another. The best singer is not

the one who has the most lithe and powerful organ. The pleasure of poems is not in them that take the handsomest measure and sound.

Without effort, and without exposing in the least how it is done, the greatest poet brings the spirit of any or all events and passions and scenes and persons, some more and some less, to bear on your individual character as you hear or read. To do this well is to compete with the laws that pursue and follow Time. What is the purpose must surely be there, and the clue of it must be there—and the faintest indication is the indication of the best, and then becomes the clearest indication. Past and present and future are not disjoin'd but join'd. The greatest poet forms the consistence of what is to be, from what has been and is. He drags the dead out of their coffins and stands them again on their feet. He says to the past, Rise and walk before me that I may realize you. He learns the lesson—he places himself where the future becomes present. The greatest poet does not only dazzle his rays over character and scenes and passions—he finally ascends, and finishes all—he exhibits the pinnacles that no man can tell what they are for, or what is beyond—he glows a moment on the extremest verge. He is most wonderful in his last half-hidden smile or frown; by that flash of the moment of parting the one that sees it shall be encouraged or terrified afterward for many years. The greatest poet does not moralize or make applications of morals—he knows the soul. The soul has that measureless pride which consists in never acknowledging any lessons or deductions but its own. But it has sympathy as measureless as its pride, and the one balances the other, and neither can stretch too far while it stretches in company with the other. The inmost secrets of art sleep with the twain. The greatest poet has lain close betwixt both, and they are vital in his style and thoughts.

The art of art, the glory of expression and the sunshine of the light of letters, is simplicity. Nothing is better than simplicity—nothing can make up for excess, or for the lack of definiteness. To carry on the heave of impulse and pierce intellectual depths and give all subjects their articulations, are powers neither common nor very uncommon. But to speak in literature with the perfect rectitude and insouciance of the movements of animals, and the unimpeachableness of the sentiment of trees in the

woods and grass by the roadside, is the flawless triumph of art. If you have look'd on him who has achiev'd it you have look'd on one of the masters of the artists of all nations and times. You shall not contemplate the flight of the gray gull over the bay, or the mettlesome action of the blood horse, or the tall leaning of sunflowers on their stalk, or the appearance of the sun journeying through heaven, or the appearance of the moon afterward, with any more satisfaction than you shall contemplate him. The great poet has less a mark'd style, and is more the channel of thoughts and things without increase of diminution, and is the free channel of himself. He swears to his art, I will not be meddlesome, I will not have in my writing any elegance, or effect, or originality, to hang in the way between me and the rest like curtains. I will have nothing hang in the way, not the richest curtains. What I tell I tell for precisely what it is. Let who may exalt or startle or fascinate or soothe, I will have purposes as health or heat or snow has, and be as regardless of observation. What I experience or portray shall go from my composition without a shred of my composition. You shall stand by my side and look in the mirror with me.

The old red blood and stainless gentility of great poets will be proved by their unconstraint. A heroic person walks at his ease through and out of that custom or precedent or authority that suits him not. Of the traits of the brotherhood of first-class writers, savants, musicians, inventors and artists, nothing is finer than silent defiance advancing from new free forms. In the need of poems, philosophy, politics, mechanism, science, behavior, the craft of art, an appropriate native grand opera, shipcraft, or any craft, he is greatest forever and ever who contributes the greatest original practical example. The cleanest expression is that which finds no sphere worthy of itself, and makes one.

The message of great poems to each man and woman are, Come to us on equal terms, only then can you understand us. We are no better than you, what we inclose you inclose, what we enjoy you may enjoy. Did you suppose there could be only one Supreme? We affirm there can be unnumber'd Supremes, and that one does not countervail another any more than one eyesight countervails another—and that men can be good or grand only of the consciousness of their supremacy within them.

What do you think is the grandeur of storms and dismemberments, and the deadliest battles and wrecks, and the wildest fury of the elements, and the power of the sea, and the motion of Nature, and the throes of human desires, and dignity and hate and love? It is that something in the soul which says, Rage on, whirl on, I tread master here and everywhere—Master of the spasms of the sky and of the shatter of the sea, Master of nature and passion and death, and of all terror and all pain.

The American bards shall be mark'd for generosity and affection, and for encouraging competitors. They shall be Kosmos, without monopoly or secrecy, glad to pass anything to anyone—hungry for equals night and day. They shall not be careful of riches and privilege—they shall be riches and privilege—they shall perceive who the most affluent man is. The most affluent man is he that confronts all the shows he sees by equivalents out of the stronger wealth of himself. The American bard shall delineate no class of persons, nor one or two out of the strata of interests, nor love most nor truth most, nor the soul most, nor the body most—and not be for the Eastern States more than the Western, or the Northern States more than the Southern.

Exact science and its practical movements are no checks on the greatest poet, but always his encouragement and support. The outset and remembrance are there—there the arms that lifted him first, and braced him best—there he returns after all his goings and comings. The sailor and traveler—the anatonomist, chemist, astronomer, geologist, phrenologist, spiritualist, methematician, historian, and lexicographer, are not poets, but they are the lawgivers of poets, and their construction underlies the structure of every perfect poem. No matter what rises or is utter'd, they sent the seed of the conception of it—of them and by them stand the visible proofs of souls. If there shall be love and content between the father and the son, and if the greatness of the son is the exuding of the greatness of the father, there shall be love between the poet and the man of demonstrable science. In the beauty of poems are henceforth the tuft and final applause of science.

Great is the faith of the flush of knowledge, and of the investigation of the depths of qualities and things. Cleaving and circling here swells the soul of the poet, yet is president of itself

always. The depths are fathomless, and therefore calm. The innocence and nakedness are resumed—they are neither modest nor immodest. The whole theory of the supernatural, and all that was twined with it or educed out of it, departs as a dream. What has ever happen'd—what happens, and whatever may or shall happen, the vital laws inclose all. They are sufficient for any case and for all cases—none to be hurried or retarded—any special miracle of affairs or persons inadmissible in the vast clear scheme where every motion and every spear of grass, and the frames and spirits of men and women and all that concerns them, are unspeakably perfect miracles, all referring to all, and each distinct and in its place. It is also not consistent with the reality of the soul to admit that there is anything in the known universe more divine than men and women.

Men and women, and the earth and all upon it, are to be taken as they are, and the investigation of their past and present and future shall be uninterrupted, and shall be done with perfect candor. Upon this basis philosophy speculates, ever looking towards the poet, ever regarding the eternal tendencies of all toward happiness, never inconsistent with what is clear to the senses and to the soul. For the eternal tendencies of all toward happiness make the only point of sane philosophy. Whatever comprehends less than that—whatever is less than the laws of light and of astronomical motion—or less than the laws that follow the thief, the liar, the glutton and the drunkard, through this life and doubtless afterward—or less than vast stretches of time, or the slow formation of density, or the patient up-heaving of strata—is of no account. Whatever would put God in a poem or system of philosophy as contending against some being or influence, is also of no account. Sanity and ensemble characterize the great master—spoilt in one principle, all is spoilt. The great master has nothing to do with miracles. He sees health for himself in being one of the mass—he sees the hiatus in singular eminence. To the perfect shape comes common ground. To be under the general law is great, for that is to correspond with it. The master knows that he is unspeakably great, and that all are unspeakably great—that nothing, for instance, is greater than to conceive children, and bring them up well—that to *be* is just as great as to perceive or tell.

In the make of the great masters the idea of political liberty

is indispensable. Liberty takes the adherence of heroes wherever man and woman exist—but never takes any adherence or welcome from the rest more than from poets. They are the voice and exposition of liberty. They out of ages are worthy the grand idea—to them it is confided, and they must sustain it. Nothing has precedence of it, and nothing can warp or degrade it.

As the attributes of the poets of the kosmos concentrate in the real body, and in the pleasure of things, they possess the superiority of genuineness over all fiction and romance. As they emit themselves, facts are shower'd over with light—the daylight is lit with more volatile light—the deep between the setting and rising sun goes deeper many fold. Each precise object or condition or combination or process exhibits a beauty—the multiplication table its—old age its—the carpenter's trade its—the grand opera its—the huge-hull'd clean-shap'd New York clipper at sea under steam or full sail gleams with unmatch'd beauty—the American circles and large harmonies of government gleam with theirs—and the commonest definite intentions and actions with theirs. The poets of the kosmos advance through all interpositions and coverings and turmoils and stratagems to first principles. They are of use—they dissolve poverty from its need, and riches from its conceit. You large proprietor, they say, shall not realize or perceive more than anyone else. The owner of the library is not he who holds a legal title to it, having bought and paid for it. Anyone and everyone is owner of the library (indeed he or she alone is owner), who can read the same through all the varieties of tongues and subjects and styles, and in whom they enter with ease, and make supple and powerful and rich and large.

These American States, strong and healthy and accomplish'd, shall receive no pleasure from violations of natural models, and must not permit them. In paintings or mouldings or carvings in mineral or wood, or in the illustrations of books or newspapers, or in the patterns of woven stuffs, or anything to beautify rooms or furniture or costumes, or to put upon cornices or monuments, or on the prows or sterns of ships, or to put anywhere before the human eye indoors or out, that which distorts honest shapes, or which creates unearthly beings or places or contingencies, is a nuisance and revolt. Of the human form especially, it is so great it must never be made ridiculous. Of ornaments to a

work nothing outre can be allow'd—but those ornaments can be allow'd that conform to the perfect facts of the open air, and that flow out of the nature of the work, and come irrepressibly from it, and are necessary to the completion of the work. Most works are most beautiful without ornament. Exaggerations will be revenged in human physiology. Clean and vigorous children are jetted and conceiv'd only in those communities where the models of natural forms are public every day. Great genius and the people of these States must never be demean'd to romances. As soon as histories are properly told, no more need of romances.

The great poets are to be known by the absence in them of tricks, and by the justification of perfect personal candor. All faults may be forgiven of him who has perfect candor. Henceforth let no man of us lie, for we have seen that openness wins the inner and outer world, and that there is no single exception, and that never since our earth gather'd itself in a mass have deceit or subterfuge or prevarication attracted its smallest particle or the faintest tinge of a shade—and that through the enveloping wealth and rank of a state, or the whole republic of states, a sneak or sly person shall be discover'd and despised—and that the soul has never once been fool'd and never can be fool'd—and thrift without the loving nod of the soul is only a foetid puff—and there never grew up in any of the continents of the globe, nor upon any planet or satellite, nor in that condition which precedes the birth of babes, nor at any time during the changes of life, nor in any stretch of abeyance or action of vitality, nor in any process of formation or reformation anywhere, a being whose instinct hated the truth.

Extreme caution or prudence, the soundest organic health, large hope and comparison and fondness for women and children, large alimentiveness and destructiveness and causality, with a perfect sense of the oneness of nature, and the propriety of the same spirit applied to human affairs, are called up of the float of the brain of the world to be parts of the greatest poet from his birth out of his mother's womb, and from her birth out of her mother's. Caution seldom goes far enough. It has been thought that the prudent citizen was the citizen who applied himself to solid gains, and did well for himself and for his family, and completed a lawful life without debt or crime. The greatest poet sees and ad-

nits these economies as he sees the economies of food and sleep, but has higher notions of prudence than to think he gives much when he gives a few slight attentions at the latch of the gate. The premises of the prudence of life are not the hospitality of it, or the ripeness and harvest of it. Beyond the independence of a little sum laid aside for burial-money, and of a few clapboards around and shingles overhead on a lot of American soil own'd, and the easy dollars that supply the year's plain clothing and meals, the melancholy prudence of the abandonment of such a great being as a man is, to the toss and pallor of years of money-making, with all their scorching days and icy nights, and all their stifling deceits and underhand dodgings, or infinitesimals of parlors, or shameless stuffing while others starve, and all the loss of the bloom and odor of the earth, and of the flowers and atmosphere, and of the sea, and of the true taste of the women and men you pass or have to do with in youth or middle age, and the issuing sickness and desperate revolt at the close of a life without elevation or naïveté, (even if you have achiev'd a secure 10,000 a year, or election to Congress or the Governorship,) and the ghastly chatter of a death without serenity or majesty, is the great fraud upon modern civilization and forethought, blotching the surface and system which civilization undeniably drafts, and moistening with tears the immense features it spreads and spreads with such velocity before the reach'd kisses of the soul.

Ever the right explanation remains to be made about prudence. The prudence of the mere wealth and respectability of the most esteem'd life appears too faint for the eye to observe at all, when little and large alike drop quietly aside at the thought of the prudence suitable for immortality. What is the wisdom that fills the thinness of a year, or seventy or eighty years—to the wisdom spaced out by ages, and coming back at a certain time with strong reinforcements and rich presents, and the clear faces of wedding-guests as far as you can look, in every direction, running gaily toward you? Only the soul is of itself—all else has reference to what ensues. All that a person does or thinks is of consequence. Nor can the push of charity or personal force ever be anything else than the profoundest reason, whether it brings argument to hand or no. No specification is necessary—to add or subtract or divide is in vain. Little or big, learn'd or unlearn'd, white or

black, legal or illegal, sick or well, from the first inspiration down the windpipe to the last expiration out of it, all that a male or female does that is vigorous and benevolent and clean is so much sure profit to him or her in the unshakable order of the universe, and through the whole scope of it forever. The prudence of the greatest poet answers at last the craving and glut of the soul, puts off nothing, permits no let-up for his own case or any case, has no particular sabbath or judgment day, divides not the living from the dead, or the righteous from the unrighteous, is satisfied with the present, matches every thought or act by its correlative, and knows no possible forgiveness or deputed atonement.

The direct trial of him who would be the greatest poet is to-day. If he does not flood himself with the immediate age as with vast oceanic tides—if he be not himself the age transfigur'd, and if to him is not open'd the eternity which gives similitude to all periods and locations and processes, and animate and inanimate forms, and which is the bond of time, and rises up from its inconceivable vagueness and infiniteness in the swimming shapes of today, and is held by the ductile anchors of life, and makes the present spot the passage from what was to what shall be, and commits itself to the representation of this wave of an hour, and this one of the sixty beautiful children of the wave—let him merge in the general run, and wait his development.

Still the final test of poems, or any character or work, remains. The prescient poet projects himself centuries ahead, and judges performer or performance after the changes of time. Does it live through them? Does it still hold on untired? Will the same style, and the direction of genius to similar points, be satisfactory now? Have the marches of tens and hundreds and thousands of years made willing detours to the right hand and the left hand for his sake? Is he beloved long and long after he is buried? Does the young man think often of him? and the young woman think often of him? and do the middle-aged and the old think of him?

A great poem is for ages and ages in common, and for all degrees and complexions, and all departments and sects, and for a woman as much as a man, and a man as much as a woman. A great poem is no finish to a man or woman, but rather a beginning. Has any one fancied he could sit at last under some due authority, and rest satisfied with explanations, and realize, and

be content and full? To no such terminus does the greatest poet bring—he brings neither cessation nor shelter'd fatness and ease. The touch of him, like Nature, tells in action. Whom he takes he takes with firm sure grasp into live regions previously unattain'd—thenceforward is no rest—they see the space and ineffable sheen that turn the old spots and lights into dead vacuums. Now there shall be a man cohered out of tumult and chaos—the elder encourages the younger and shows him how—they two shall launch off fearlessly together till the new world fits an orbit for itself, and looks unabash'd on the lesser orbits of the stars, and sweeps through the ceaseless rings, and shall never be quiet again.

There will soon be no more priests. Their work is done. A new order shall arise, and they shall be the priests of man, and every man shall be his own priest. They shall find their inspiration in real objects today, symptoms of the past and future. They shall not deign to defend immortality or God, or the perfection of things, or liberty, or the exquisite beauty and reality of the soul. They shall arise in America, and be responded to from the remainder of the earth.

The English language befriends the grand American expression—it is brawny enough, and limber and full enough. On the tough stock of a race who through all change of circumstances was never without the idea of political liberty, which is the animus of all liberty, it has attracted the terms of daintier and gayer and subtler and more elegant tongues. It is the powerful language of resistance—it is the dialect of common sense. It is the speech of the proud and melancholy races, and of all who aspire. It is the chosen tongue to express growth, faith, self-esteem, freedom, justice, equality, friendliness, amplitude, prudence, decision, and courage. It is the medium that shall wellnigh express the inexpressible.

No great literature, nor any like style of behavior or oratory, or social intercourse or household arrangements, or public institutions, or the treatment by bosses of employ'd people, nor executive detail, or detail of the army and navy, nor spirit of legislation or courts, or police or tuition or architecture, or songs or amusements, can long elude the jealous and passionate instinct of American standards. Whether or no the sign appears from the mouths of the people, it throbs a live interrogation in every free-

man's and freewoman's heart, after that which passes by, or this built to remain. Is it uniform with my country? Are its disposals without ignominious distinctions? Is it for the ever-growing communes of brothers and lovers, large, well united, proud, beyond the old models, generous beyond all models? Is it something grown fresh out of the fields, or drawn from the sea for use to me today here? I know that what answers for me, an American, in Texas, Ohio, Canada, must answer for any individual or nation that serves for a part of my materials. Does this answer? Is it for the nursing of the young of the republic? Does it solve readily with the sweet milk of the nipples of the breasts of the Mother of Many Children?

America prepares with composure and good-will for the visitors that have sent word. It is not intellect that is to be their warrant and welcome. The talented, the artist, the ingenious, the editor, the statesman, the erudite, are not unappreciated—they fall in their place and do their work. The soul of the nation also does its work. It rejects none, it permits all. Only toward the like of itself will it advance half-way. An individual is as superb as a nation when he has the qualities which make a superb nation. The soul of the largest and wealthiest and proudest nation may well go half-way to meet that of its poets,

HENRY JAMES

1843-1916

Born in New York, the son of a clergyman noted for his philosophical-theological writings. Educated in New York, Geneva, Paris, and Boulogne. Lived in Europe 1855-59, then returned to the U. S. to study law at Harvard. His literary career began with contributions to American periodicals in 1865. In 1869 he took up residence in Europe, living chiefly in England and Italy. Became a naturalized British subject in 1915. Died in London. He has a felicitous style, and is the subtlest of American novelists. His stories contrast European and American character and institutions. Most noted among his numerous novels and short stories are "Watch and Ward," "The American," "Daisy Miller," "Portrait of a Lady," and "Julia Bride."

A DAY OF DAYS

M R. HERBERT MOORE, a gentleman of some note in the scientific world, and a childless widower, finding himself at last unable to reconcile his sedentary habits with the management of a household, had invited his only sister to come and superintend his domestic affairs. Miss Adela Moore had assented the more willingly to his proposal, as by her mother's death she had recently been left without a formal protector. She was twenty-five years of age, and was a very active member of what she and her friends called society. She was almost equally at home in the very best company of three great cities, and she had encountered most of the adventures which await a girl on the threshold of life. She had become rather hastily and imprudently engaged, but she had eventually succeeded in disengaging herself. She had spent a summer in Europe, and she had made a voyage to Cuba with a dear friend in the last stage of consumption, who had died at the hotel in Havana. Although by no means beautiful in person, she was yet thoroughly pleasing, rejoicing in what young ladies are fond of calling an *air*. That is, she was tall and slender, with a long neck, a low forehead and a handsome nose. Even after six years of "society," too, she still had excellent manners. She was, moreover, mistress of a very pretty little fortune, and was accounted clever without detriment to her amiability, and amiable without detriment to her wit. These facts, as the reader will allow, might have ensured her

the very best prospects; but he has seen that she had found herself willing to forfeit her prospects and bury herself in the country. It seemed to her that she had seen enough of the world and of human nature, and that a couple of years of seclusion might not be unprofitable. She had begun to suspect that for a girl of her age she was unduly old and wise—and, what is more, to suspect that others suspected as much. A great observer of life and manners, so far as her opportunities went, she conceived that it behooved her to organize the results of her observation into principles of conduct and of belief. She was becoming—so she argued—too impersonal, too critical, too intelligent, too contemplative, too just. A woman had no business to be so just. The society of nature, of the great expansive skies and the primeval woods, would prove severely unpropitious to her excessive intellectual growth. She would spend her time in the fields and live in her feelings, her simple sense, and the perusal of profitable books from Herbert's library.

She found her brother very prettily housed at about a mile's distance from the nearest town, and about six miles' distance from another town, the seat of a small college, before which he delivered a weekly lecture. She had seen so little of him of late years that his acquaintance was almost to make; but it was very soon made. Herbert Moore was one of the simplest and least aggressive of men, and one of the most patient and delicate of students. He had a vague notion that Adela was a young woman of extravagant pleasures, and that, somehow, on her arrival, his house would be overrun with the train of her attendant revellers. It was not until after they had been six months together that he discovered that his sister was a model of diligence and temperance. By the time six months more had passed, Adela had bought back a delightful sense of youth and *naïveté*. She learned, under her brother's tuition, to walk—nay, to climb, for there were great hills in the neighborhood—to ride and to botanize. At the end of a year, in the month of August, she received a visit from an old friend, a girl of her own age, who had been spending July at a watering-place, and who was about to be married. Adela had begun to fear that she had lapsed into an almost irreclaimable rusticity, and had suffered a permanent diminution of the social facility for which she had formerly been distinguished, but a week spent in *tête-à-tête* with

her friend convinced her not only that she had not forgotten much that she had feared, but also that she had not forgotten much that she had hoped. For this, and other reasons, her friend's departure left her slightly depressed. She felt lonely and even a little elderly. She had lost another illusion. Laura B., for whom a year ago she had entertained a serious regard, now impressed her as a very flimsy little person, who talked about her lover with an almost indecent flippancy.

Meanwhile, September was slowly running its course. One morning Mr. Moore took a hasty breakfast and started to catch a train for S., whither a scientific conference called him, which might, he said, release him that afternoon in time for dinner at home, and might, on the other hand, detain him until the evening. It was almost the first time during Adela's rustication that she had been left alone for several hours. Her brother's quiet presence was inappreciable enough; yet now that he was at a distance she nevertheless felt a singular sense of freedom; a sort of return of those days of early childhood, when, through some domestic catastrophe, she had for an infinite morning been left to her own devices. What should she do? she asked herself, half laughing. It was a fair day for work: but it was a still better one for play. Should she drive into town and pay a long-standing debt of morning calls? Should she go into the kitchen and try her hand at a pudding for dinner? She felt a delicious longing to do something illicit, to play with fire, to discover some Bluebeard's closet. But poor Herbert was no Bluebeard. If she were to burn down his house he would exact no amends. Adela went out to the veranda, and, sitting down on the steps, gazed across the country. It was apparently the last day of Summer. The sky was faintly blue; the woody hills were putting on the morbid colors of Autumn; the great pine grove behind the house seemed to have caught and have imprisoned the protesting breezes. Looking down the road toward the village, it occurred to Adela that she might have a visit, and so kindly was her mood that she felt herself competent to a chat with one of her rustic neighbors. As the sun rose higher, she went in and established herself with a piece of embroidery in a deep, bow window in the second story, which, betwixt its muslin curtains and its external frame-work of vines, commanded most insidiously the principal approach to the house. While she drew

her threads, she surveyed the road with a deepening conviction that she was destined to have a caller. The air was warm, yet not hot; the dust had been laid during the night by a gentle rain. It had been from the first a source of complaint among Adela's new friends that her courtesies were so thoroughly indiscriminating. Not only had she lent herself to no friendships, but she had committed herself to no preferences. Nevertheless, it was with a by no means impartial fancy that she sat thus expectant at her casement. She had very soon made up her mind that, to answer the exactions of the hour, her visitor should perforce be of the other sex, and as, thanks to the somewhat uncompromising indifference which, during her residence, she had exhibited to the *jeunesse dorée* of the county, her roll-call, in this her hour of need, was limited to a single name, so her thoughts were now centered upon the bearer of that name, Mr. Madison Perkins, the Unitarian minister. If, instead of being Miss Moore's story, this were Mr. Perkins', it might easily be condensed into the one pregnant fact that he was very far gone in love for our heroine. Although of a different faith from his, she had been so well pleased with one of his sermons, to which she had allowed herself to lend a tolerant ear, that, meeting him some time afterward, she had received him with what she considered a rather knotty doctrinal question; whereupon, gracefully waiving the question, he had asked permission to call upon her and talk over her "difficulties." This short interview had enshrined her in the young minister's heart; and the half dozen occasions on which he had subsequently contrived to see her had each contributed an additional taper to her shrine. It is but fair to add, however, that, although a captive, Mr. Perkins was as yet no captor. He was simply an honorable young man, who happened at this moment to be the most sympathetic companion within reach. Adela, at twenty-five years of age, had both a past and a future. Mr. Perkins reechoed the one, and foreshadowed the other.

So, at last, when, as the morning waned toward noon, Adela descried in the distance a man's figure treading the grassy margin of the road, and swinging his stick as he came, she smiled to herself with some complacency. But even while she smiled she became conscious of a most foolish acceleration of the process of her heart. She rose, and resenting her gratuitous emotion,

stood for a moment half resolved to have herself denied. As she did so, she glanced along the road again. Her friend had drawn nearer, and, as the distance lessened, lo! it seemed to her that he was not her friend. Before many moments her doubts were removed. The gentleman was a stranger. In front of the house three roads diverged from a great spreading elm. The stranger came along the opposite side of the highway, and when he reached the elm stopped and looked about him as if to verify a direction. Then he deliberately crossed over. Adela had time to see, unseen, that he was a shapely young man, with a bearded chin and a straw hat. After the due interval, Becky, the maid, came up with a card somewhat rudely superscribed in pencil:

THOMAS LUDLOW,
New York.

Turning it over in her fingers, Adela saw that the reverse of a card had been used, abstracted from the basket on her own drawing-room table. The printed name on the other side was dashed out; it ran: *Mr. Madison Perkins.*

"He asked me to give you this, ma'am," said Becky. "He helped himself to it out of the tray."

"Did he ask for me by name?"

"No, ma'am, he asked for Mr. Moore. When I told him Mr. Moore was away, he asked for some of the family. I told him you were all the family, ma'am."

"Very well," said Adela, "I will go down." But, begging her pardon, we will precede her by a few steps.

Tom Ludlow, as his friends called him, was a young man of twenty-eight, concerning whom you might have heard the most various opinions; for, as far as he was known (which, indeed, was not very far), he was at once one of the best liked and one of the best hated of men. Born in one of the lower *strata* of New York society, he was still slightly incrusted, if we may so express it, with his native soil. A certain crudity of manners and of aspect proved him to be one of the great majority of the ungloved. On this basis, however, he was a sufficiently good-looking fellow: a middle-sized, agile figure; a head so well shaped as to be handsome; a pair of inquisitive, responsive eyes, and a large, manly mouth, constituting his heritage of beauty. Turned upon the world at an early age, he had, in the pursuit of a subsistence, tried his head at everything in succession, and had

generally found it to be quite as hard as the opposing substance; and his figure may have been thought to reflect this sweet assurance in a look of somewhat aggressive satisfaction with things in general, himself included. He was a man of strong faculties and a strong will, but it is doubtful whether his feelings were stronger than he. He was liked for his directness, his good humor, his general soundness and serviceableness; he was disliked for the same qualities under different names; that is, for his impudence, his offensive optimisms and his inhuman avidity for facts. When his friends insisted upon his noble disinterestedness, his enemies were wont to reply it was all very well to ignore, to nullify oneself in the pursuit of science, but that to suppress the rest of mankind coincidentally betrayed an excess of zeal. Fortunately for Ludlow, on the whole, he was no great listener; and even if he had been, a certain plebeian thick-skinnedness would have been the guaranty of his equanimity; although it must be added that, if, like a genuine democrat, he was very insensitive, like a genuine democrat, too, he was amazingly proud. His tastes, which had always been for the natural sciences, had recently led him to paleontology, that branch of them cultivated by Herbert Moore; and it was upon business connected with this pursuit that, after a short correspondence, he had now come to see him.

As Adela went in to him, he came out with a bow from the window, whence he had been contemplating the lawn. She acknowledged his greeting.

"Miss Moore, I believe," said Ludlow.

"Miss Moore," said Adela.

"I beg your pardon for this intrusion, but as I had come from a distance to see Mr. Moore on business, I thought I might venture either to ask at headquarters how he may most easily be reached, or even to charge you with a message." These words were accompanied with a smile before which it was Adela's destiny to succumb—if this is not too forcible a term for the movement of feeling with which she answered them.

"Pray make no apologies," she said. "We hardly recognize such a thing as intrusion in the country. Won't you sit down? My brother went away only this morning, and I expect him back this afternoon."

"This afternoon? Indeed. In that case I believe I'll wait. It

was very stupid of me not to have dropped a word beforehand. But I have been in the city all summer long, and I shall not be sorry to screw a little vacation out of his business. I'm prodigiously fond of the country, and I very seldom get a glimpse of it."

"It's possible," said Adela, "that my brother may not come home until the evening. He was uncertain. You might go to him at S."

Ludlow reflected a moment, with his eyes on his hostess. "If he does return in the afternoon, at what hour will he arrive?"

"At three."

"And my own train leaves at four. Allow him a quarter of an hour to come from town and myself a quarter of an hour to get there (if he would give me his vehicle back), I should have half an hour to see him. We couldn't do much talk, but I could ask him the essential questions. I wish chiefly to ask him for some letters. It seems a pity to take two superfluous—that is, possibly superfluous—railway journeys of an hour apiece, for I should probably come back with him. Don't you think so?" he asked, very frankly.

"You know best," said Adela. "I'm not particularly fond of the journey to S., even when it's absolutely necessary."

"Yes; and then this is such a lovely day for a good long ramble in the fields. That's a thing I haven't done since I don't know when. I'll stay." And he placed his hat on the floor beside him.

"I'm afraid, now that I think of it," said Adela, "that there is no train until so late an hour that you would have very little time left on your arrival to talk with my brother before the hour at which he himself might have determined to start for home. It's true that you might induce him to remain till the evening."

"Dear me! I shouldn't like to do that. It might be very inconvenient for him. Besides I shouldn't have time. And then I always like to see a man in his own home—or in my own home; a man, that is, whom I have any regard for—and I have a very great regard for your brother, Miss Moore. When men meet at a half-way house, neither feels at his ease. And then this is such an uncommonly pretty place of yours," pursued Ludlow, looking about him.

"Yes, it's a very pretty place," said Adela.

Ludlow got up and walked to the window. "I want to look at your view," he said. "A lovely view it is. You're a happy woman, Miss Moore, to live before such a prospect."

"Yes, if pretty scenery can make one happy, I ought to be happy." And Adela was glad to regain her feet and stand on the other side of the table, before the window.

"Don't you think it can?" asked Ludlow, turning around. "I don't know, though, perhaps it can't. Ugly sights can't make you unhappy, necessarily. I've been working for a year in one of the narrowest, darkest, dirtiest, and busiest streets in New York, with rusty bricks and muddy gutters for scenery. But I think I can hardly set up to be miserable. I wish I could. It might be a claim on your favor." As he said these words, he stood leaning against the window shutter, without the curtain, with folded arms. The morning light covered his face, and, mingled with that of his broad laugh, showed Adela that it was a very pleasant face.

"Whatever else he may be," she said to herself as she stood within the shade of the other curtain, playing with the paper-knife which she had plucked from the table, "I think he is honest. I am afraid he isn't a gentleman—but he is not a simpleton."

She met his eye frankly for a moment. "What do you want of my favor?" she asked, with an abruptness of which she was acutely conscious. "Does he wish to make friends," she pursued, "or does he merely wish to pay me a vulgar compliment? There is bad taste, perhaps, in either case, but especially in the latter." Meanwhile her visitor had already answered her.

"What do I want of your favor? Why, I want to make the most of it." And Ludlow blushed at his own audacity.

Adela, however, kept her color. "I'm afraid it will need all your pulling and stretching," she said, with a little laugh.

"All right. I'm great at pulling and stretching," said Ludlow, with a deepening of his great masculine blush, and a broad laugh to match it.

Adela glanced toward the clock on the mantel. She was curious to measure the duration of her acquaintance with this breezy invader of her privacy, with whom she so suddenly found herself bandying florid personalities. She had known him some eight minutes.

Ludlow observed her movement. "I'm interrupting you and detaining you from your own affairs," he said; and he moved toward his hat. "I suppose I must bid you good-morning." And he picked it up.

Adela stood at the table and watched him cross the room. To express a very delicate feeling in terms comparatively broad, she was loth to have him go. She divined, too, that he was loth to go. The knowledge of this feeling on his part, however, affected her composure slightly. The truth is—we say it with all respect—Adela was an old hand. She was modest, honest and wise; but, as we have said, she had a past—a past of which importunate swains in the guise of morning callers had been no inconsiderable part; and a great dexterity in what may be called outflanking these gentlemen, was one of her registered accomplishments. Her liveliest emotion at present, therefore, was less one of annoyance at her companion than of surprise at her own gracious impulses, which were yet undenialble. "Am I dreaming?" she asked herself. She looked out of the window, and then back at Ludlow, who stood grasping his hat and stick, contemplating her face. Should she bid him remain? "He is honest," she repeated; "why should not I be honest for once?" "I'm sorry you are in a hurry," she said aloud.

"I am in no hurry," he answered.

Adela turned her face to the window again, and toward the opposite hills. There was a moment's pause.

"I thought you were in a hurry," said Ludlow.

Adela gave him her eyes. "My brother would be very glad to have you remain as long as you like. He would expect me to offer you what little hospitality is in my power."

"Pray, offer it then."

"That's easily done. This is the parlor, and there beyond the hall, is my brother's study. Perhaps you would like to look at his books and his collections. I know nothing about them, and I should be a very poor guide. But you are welcome to go in and use your discretion in examining what may interest you."

"This, I take it, would be but another way of bidding you a good-morning."

"For the present, yes."

"But I hesitate to take such liberties with your brother's treasures as you prescribe."

"Prescribe, sir? I prescribe nothing."

"But if I decline to penetrate into Mr. Moore's *sanctum*, what alternative remains?"

"Really—you must make your own alternative."

"I think you mentioned the parlor. Suppose I choose that."

"Just as you please. Here are some books, and, if you like, I will bring you some magazines. Can I serve you in any other way? Are you tired by your walk? Would you like a glass of wine?"

"Tired by my walk?—not exactly. You are very kind, but I feel no immediate desire for a glass of wine. I think you needn't trouble yourself about the magazines, either. I am in no mood to read." And Ludlow pulled out his watch and compared it with the clock. "I'm afraid your clock is fast."

"Yes," said Adela, "very likely."

"Some ten minutes. Well, I suppose I had better be walking;" and, coming toward Adela, he extended his hand.

She gave him hers. "It's a day of days for a long, slow ramble," she said.

Ludlow's only rejoinder was his hand-shake. He moved slowly toward the door, half accompanied by Adela. "Poor fellow!" she said to herself. The lattice summer-door admitted into the entry a cool, dusky light, in which Adela looked pale. Ludlow divided its wings with his stick, and disclosed a landscape, long, deep and bright, framed by the pillars of the veranda. He stopped on the threshold, swinging his stick. "I hope I shan't lose my way," he said.

"I hope not. My brother will not forgive me if you do."

Ludlow's brows were slightly contracted by a frown, but he contrived to smile with his lips. "When shall I come back?" he asked abruptly.

Adela found but a low tone—almost a whisper—at her command, to answer. "Whenever you please," she said.

The young man turned about, with his back to the bright doorway, and looked into Adela's face, which was now covered with light. "Miss Moore," said he, "It's very much against my will that I leave you at all."

Adela stood debating with herself. What if her companion should stay? It would, under the circumstances, be an adventure; but was an adventure necessarily unadvisable? It lay

wholly with herself to decide. She was her own mistress, and she had hitherto been a just mistress. Might she not for once be a generous one? The reader will observe in Adela's meditation the recurrence of this saving clause "for once." It rests upon the simple fact that she had begun the day in a romantic mood. She was prepared to be interested; and now that an interesting phenomenon had presented itself, that it stood before her in vivid human—nay, manly—shape, instinct with reciprocity, was she to close her hand to the liberality of fate? To do so would be to court mischance; for it would involve, moreover, a petty insult to human nature. Was not the man before her fairly redolent of honesty, and was that not enough? He was not what Adela had been used to call a gentleman. To this conviction she had made a swallow's flight; but from this assurance she would start. "I have seen" (she thus concluded) "all the gentlemen can show me; let us try something new."

"I see no reason why you should run away so fast, Mr. Ludlow," she said, aloud.

"I think," cried Ludlow, "it would be the greatest piece of folly I ever committed."

"I think it would be a pity," said Adela, with a smile.

"And you invite me into your parlor again? I come as your visitor, you know. I was your brother's before. It's a simple enough matter. We are old friends. We have a broad common ground in your brother. Isn't that about it?"

"You may adopt whatever theory you please. To my mind, it is, indeed, a very simple matter."

"Oh, but I wouldn't have it too simple," said Ludlow, with a mighty smile.

"Have it as you please."

Ludlow leaned back against the doorway. "Your kindness is too much for me, Miss Moore," said he. "I am passive; I am in your hands; do with me what you please. I can't help contrasting my fate with what it might have been but for you. A quarter of an hour ago I was ignorant of your existence; you weren't in my programme. I had no idea your brother had a sister. When your servant spoke of 'Miss Moore,' upon my word I expected something rather elderly—something venerable—some rigid old lady, who would say, 'exactly,' and 'very well, sir,' and leave me to spend the rest of the morning tilting back in

a chair on the hotel piazza. It shows what fools we are to attempt to forecast the future."

"We must not let our imagination run away with us in any direction," said Adela.

"Imagination? I don't believe I have any. No, madam," and Ludlow straightened himself up, "I live in the present. I write my programme from hour to hour—or, at any rate, I will in the future."

"I think you are very wise," said Adela. "Suppose you write a programme for the present hour. What shall we do? It seems to me a pity to spend so lovely a morning indoors. I fancy this is the last day of Summer. We ought to celebrate it. How would you like a walk?" Adela had decided that, to reconcile her favors with the proper maintenance of her dignity, her only course was to play the perfect hostess. This decision made, very naturally and gracefully she played her part. It was the one possible part. And yet it did not preclude those delicate sensations with which her novel episode seemed charged: it simply legitimated them. A romantic adventure on so classical a basis would assuredly hurt no one.

"I should like a walk very much," said Ludlow; "a walk with a halt at the end of it."

"Well, if you will consent to a short halt at the beginning of it," said Adela, "I will be with you in a very few minutes." When she returned in her little hat and shawl, she found her friend seated on the veranda steps. He arose and gave her a card.

"I have been requested, in your absence, to hand you this," he said.

Adela read with some compunction the name of Mr. Madison Perkins.

"Has he been here?" she asked. "Why didn't he come in?"

"I told him you were not at home. If it wasn't true then, it was going to be true so soon that the interval was hardly worth taking account of. He addressed himself to me, as I seemed from my position to be quite at home here; but I confess he looked at me as if he doubted my word. He hesitated as to whether he should confide his name to me, or whether he should confide it in that shape to the entry table. I think he wished to show me that he suspected my veracity, for he was making rather grimly for the table when I, fearing that once

inside the house he might encounter the living truth, informed him in the most good-humored tone possible that I would take charge of his little tribute."

"I think, Mr. Ludlow, that you are a strangely unscrupulous man. How did you know that Mr. Perkin's business was not urgent?"

"I didn't know it. But I knew it could be no more urgent than mine. Depend upon it, Miss Moore, you have no case against me. I only pretend to be a man; to have admitted that charming young gentleman would have been heroic."

Adela was familiar with a sequestered spot, in the very heart of the fields, as it seemed to her, to which she now proposed to conduct her friend. The point was to select a goal neither too distant nor too near, and to adopt a pace neither too rapid nor too slow. But although Adela's happy valley was a good two miles away, and they had measured the interval with the very *minimum* of speed, yet most sudden seemed their arrival at the stile over which Adela was used to strike into the meadows. Once on the road, she felt a precipitate conviction that there could be no evil in an adventure so essentially wholesome as that to which she had lent herself, and that there could be no guile in a spirit so deeply sensitive to the sacred influences of Nature, and to the melancholy aspect of incipient Autumn as that of her companion. A man with an unaffected relish for small children is a man to inspire young women with a generous confidence; and so, in a lesser degree, a man with a genuine feeling for the simple beauties of a common New England landscape may not unreasonably be accepted by the daughters of the scene as a person worthy of their esteem. Adela was a great observer of the clouds, the trees and the streams, the sounds and colors, the echoes and reflections native to her adopted home; and she experienced an honest joy at the sight of Ludlow's keen appreciation of these modest facts. His enjoyment of them, deep as it was, however, had to struggle against that sensuous depression natural to a man who had spent the Summer in a close and fetid laboratory in the heart of a great city, and against a sensation of a less material color—the feeling that Adela was a delightful girl. Still, naturally a great talker, he celebrated his impressions in a generous flow of good-humored eloquence. Adela resolved within herself that he was decidedly a companion for the open

air. He was a man to make use, even to abuse, of the wide horizon and the high ceiling of Nature. The freedom of his gestures, the sonority of his voice, the keenness of his vision, the general vivacity of his manners, seemed to necessitate and to justify a universal absence of barriers. They crossed the stile, and waded through the long grass of several successive meadows, until the ground began to rise, the stony surfaces to crop through the turf, when, after a short ascent they reached a broad plateau, covered with boulders and shrubs, which lost itself on one side in a short, steep cliff, whence fields and marshes stretched down to the opposite river; and on the other, in scattered clumps of pine and maple, which gradually thickened and multiplied, until the horizon in that quarter was blue with a long line of woods. Here was both sun and shade—the unobstructed sky, or the whispering dome of a circle of pines. Adela led the way to a sunny seat among the rocks, which commanded the course of the river, and where a cluster of trees would lend an admonitory undertone to their conversation.

Before long, however, its muffled eloquence became rather importunate, and Adela remarked upon the essential melancholy of the phenomenon.

"It has always seemed to me," rejoined Ludlow, "that the wind in the pines expresses tolerably well man's sense of a coming change, simply *as a change*."

"Perhaps it does," said Adela. "The pines are forever rustling, and men are forever changing."

"Yes, but they can only be said to express it when there is some one there to hear them; and more especially some one in whose life a change is, to his own knowledge, going to take place. Then they are quite prophetic. Don't you know Longfellow says so?"

"Yes, I know Longfellow says so. But you seem to speak from your own feelings."

"I do."

"Is there a change pending in your life?"

"Yes, rather an important one."

"I believe that is what men say when they are going to be married," said Adela.

"I'm going to be divorced, rather. I'm going to Europe."

"Indeed! soon?"

"Tomorrow," said Ludlow, after an instant's pause.

"Oh!" said Adela, "How I envy you!"

Ludlow, who sat looking over the cliff and tossing stones down into the plain, observed a certain inequality in the tone of his companion's two exclamations. The first was nature, the second art. He turned his eyes upon her, but she had turned hers away upon the distance. Then, for a moment, he retreated within himself and thought. He rapidly surveyed his position. Here was he, Tom Ludlow, a hard headed son of toil, without fortune, without credit, without antecedents, whose lot was cast exclusively with vulgar males, and who had never had a mother, a sister nor a well-bred sweetheart to pitch his voice for the feminine tympanum; who had seldom come nearer an indubitable young lady than, in a favoring crowd, to receive a mechanical "thank you" (as if he were a policeman), for some ingeniously provoked service; here he found himself up to his neck in a sudden pastoral with the most ladyish young woman in the land. That it was in him to enjoy the society of such a woman (provided, of course, she were not a fool), he very well knew; but he had not yet suspected that it was possible for him (in the midst of more serious cares) to obtain it. Was he now to infer that this final gift was his—the gift of pleasing women who were worth the pleasing? The inference was at least logical. He had made a good impression. Why else should a modest and discerning girl have so speedily have granted him her favor? It was with a little thrill of satisfaction that Ludlow reflected upon the directness of his course. "It all comes back," he said to himself, "to my old theory, that a process can't be too simple. I used no arts. In such an enterprise I shouldn't have known where to begin. It was my ignorance of the regulation method that served me. Women like a gentleman, of course; but they like a man better." It was the little touch of nature he had discerned in Adela's tone that had set him thinking; but as compared with the frankness of his own attitude it betrayed after all no undue emotion. Ludlow had accepted the fact of his adaptability to the idle mood of a cultivated woman in a thoroughly rational spirit, and he was not now tempted to exaggerate its bearings. He was not the man to be intoxicated by success—this or any other. "If Miss Moore," he pursued, "is so wise—or so foolish—as to like me half an hour for what I

am, she is welcome. Assuredly," he added, as he gazed at her intelligent profile, "she will not like me for what I am not." It needs a woman, however, far more intelligent than (thank heaven!) most women are—more intelligent, certainly, than Adela was—to guard her happiness against a strong man's consistent assumption of her intelligence; and doubtless it was from a sense of this general truth, as Ludlow still gazed, he felt an emotion of manly tenderness. "I wouldn't offend her for the world," he thought. Just then, Adela, conscious of his gaze, looked about; and before he knew it, Ludlow had repeated aloud, "Miss Moore, I wouldn't offend you for the world."

Adela glanced at him for a moment with a little flush that subsided into a smile. "To what dreadful injury is that the prelude?" she asked.

"It's the prelude to nothing. It refers to the past—to any possible displeasure I may have caused you."

"Your scruples are unnecessary, Mr. Ludlow. If you had given me offense, I should not have left you to apologize for it. I should not have left the matter to occur to you as you sat dreaming charitably in the sun."

"What would you have done?"

"Done? nothing. You don't imagine I would have rebuked you—or snubbed you—or answered you back, I take it. I would have left undone—what, I can't tell you. Ask yourself what I have done. I'm sure I hardly know myself," said Adela, with some intensity. "At all events, here I am sitting with you in the fields, as if you were a friend of years. Why do you speak of offense?" And Adela (an uncommon accident with her) lost command of her voice, which trembled ever so slightly. "What an odd thought! why should you offend me? Do I invite it?" Her color had deepened again, and her eyes brightened. She had forgotten herself, and before speaking had not, as was her wont, sought counsel of that staunch conservative, her taste. She had spoken from a full heart—a heart which had been filling rapidly since the outset of their walk with a feeling almost passionate in its quality, and which that little blast of prose which had brought her Ludlow's announcement of his departure, had caused to overflow. The reader may give this feeling such a name as he pleases. We will content ourselves with saying that Adela had played with fire so effectually that she had

been scorched. The slight vehemence of the speech just quoted had covered her sensation of pain.

"You pull one up rather short, Miss Moore," said Ludlow. "A man says the best he can."

Adela made no reply. For a moment she hung her head. Was she to cry out because she was hurt? Was she to introduce her injured soul as an impudent third into the company? No! Here our reserved and contemplated heroine is herself again. Her part was still to be the perfect young lady. For our own part, we can imagine no figure more bewitching than that of the perfect young lady under these circumstances; and if Adela had been the most accomplished coquette in the world she could not have assumed a more becoming expression than the air of languid equanimity which now covered her features. But having paid this generous homage to propriety, she felt free to suffer. Raising her eyes from the ground, she abruptly addressed her companion with this injunction:

"Mr. Ludlow," said she, "tell me something about yourself."

Ludlow burst into a laugh, "What shall I tell you?"

"Everything."

"Everything? Excuse me, I'm not such a fool. But do you know that's a delicious request you make? I suppose I ought to blush and hesitate; but I never yet blushed or hesitated in the right place."

"Very good. There is one fact. Continue. Begin at the beginning."

"Well, let me see. My name you know. I'm twenty-eight years old."

"That's the end," said Adela.

"But you don't want the history of my babyhood, I take it. I imagine that I was a very big, noisy and ugly baby: what's called a 'splendid infant.' My parents were poor, and, of course, honest. They belonged to a very different set—or 'sphere,' I suppose you call it—from any you probably know. They were working people. My father was a chemist in a small way, and I fancy my mother was not above using her hands to turn a penny. But although I don't remember her, I am sure she was a good, sound woman; I feel her occasionally in my own sinews. I myself have been at work all my life, and a very good worker I am, let me tell you. I'm not patient, as I imagine your brother

to be—although I have more patience than you might suppose—but I'm plucky. If you think I am over-egotistical, remember 'twas you began it. I don't know whether I'm clever, and I don't much care ; that word is used only by unpractical people. But I'm clear-headed, and inquisitive, and enthusiastic. That's as far as I can describe myself. I don't know anything about my character. I simply suspect I'm a pretty good fellow. I don't know whether I'm grave or gay, lively or severe. I don't know whether I'm high tempered or low-tempered. I don't believe I'm 'high-toned.' I fancy I'm good-natured enough, inasmuch as I am not nervous. I should not be at all surprised to discover I was prodigiously conceited; but I'm afraid the discovery wouldn't cut me down, much. I'm desperately hard to snub, I know. Oh, you would think me a great brute if you knew me. I should hesitate to say whether I am of a loving turn. I know I'm desperately tired of a number of persons who are very fond of me; I'm afraid I'm ungrateful. Of course as a man speaking to a woman, there's nothing for it but to say I'm selfish ; but I hate to talk about such windy abstractions. In the way of positive facts : I'm not educated. I know no Greek and very little Latin. But I can honestly say that first and last I have read a great many books—and, thank God, I have a memory! And I have some tastes, too. I'm very fond of music. I have a good old voice of my own : *that* I can't help knowing ; and I am not one to be bullied about pictures. Is that enough? I'm conscious of an utter inability to say anything to the point. To put myself in a nutshell, I suppose I'm simply a working man ; I have his virtues and I have his defects. I'm a very common fellow."

"Do you call yourself a very common fellow because you really believe yourself to be one, or because you are weakly tempted to disfigure your rather flattering catalogue with a final blot?"

"I'm sure I don't know. You show more subtlety in that one question than I have shown in my whole string of affirmations. You women are strong on asking witty questions. Seriously, I believe I *am* a common fellow. I wouldn't make the admission to everyone though. But to you, Miss Moore, who sit there under your parasol as impartial as the Muse of History, to you I owe the truth. I'm no man of genius. There is something I miss ; some final distinction I lack ; you may call it what you please.

Perhaps it's humility. Perhaps you can find it in Ruskin, some where. Perhaps it's patience—perhaps it's imagination. I'm vulgar, Miss Moore. I'm the vulgar son of vulgar people. I use the word, of course in its strictest sense. So much I grant you at the outset, and then I walk ahead."

"Have you any sisters?"

"Not a sister; and no brothers, nor cousins, nor uncles, nor aunts."

"And you sail for Europe, tomorrow?"

"Tomorrow at ten o'clock."

"To be away how long?"

"As long as I possibly can. Five years if possible."

"What do you expect to do in those five years?"

"Study."

"Nothing but study?"

"It will all come back to that, I fancy. I hope to enjoy myself reasonably, and to look at the world as I go. But I must not waste time; I'm growing old."

"Where are you going?"

"To Berlin. I wanted to get letters from your brother."

"Have you money? Are you well off?"

"Well off? Not I, no. I'm poor. I travel on a little money that has just come to me from an unexpected quarter: an old debt owing my father. It will take me to Germany and keep me for six months. After that I shall work my way."

"Are you happy? Are you contented?"

"Just now I'm pretty comfortable, thank you."

"But will you be so when you get to Berlin?"

"I don't promise to be contented; but I'm pretty sure to be happy."

"Well!" said Adela, "I sincerely hope you may be."

"Amen!" said Ludlow.

Of what more was said at this moment, no record may be given. The reader has been put into possession of the key of our friends' conversation; it is only needful to say that substantially upon this key, it was prolonged for half an hour more. As the minutes elapsed, Adela found herself drifting further and further away from her anchorage. When at last she compelled herself to consult her watch, and remind her companion that there remained but just time enough for them to reach home,

in anticipation of her brother's arrival, she knew that she was rapidly floating seaward. As she descended the hill at her companion's side, she felt herself suddenly thrilled by an acute temptation. Her first instinct was to close her eyes upon it, in the trust that when she opened them again it would have vanished; but she found that it was not to be so uncompromisingly dismissed. It importuned her so effectually, that before she had walked a mile homeward, she had succumbed to it, or had at least given it the pledge of that quickening of the heart which accompanies a bold resolution. This little sacrifice allowed her no breath for idle words, and she accordingly advanced with a bent and listening head. Ludlow marched along, with no apparent diminution of his habitual buoyancy of mien, talking as fast and as loud as at the outset. He adventured a prophecy that Mr. Moore would not have returned, and charged Adela with a humorous message of regrets. Adela had begun by wondering whether the approach of their separation had wrought within him any sentimental depression at all commensurate with her own, with that which sealed her lips and weighed upon her heart; and now she was debating as to whether his express declaration that he felt "awfully blue" ought necessarily to remove her doubts. Ludlow followed up this declaration with a very pretty review of the morning, and a sober valedictory which, whether intensely felt or not, struck Adela as at least nobly bare of flimsy compliments. He might be a common fellow—but he was certainly a very uncommon one. When they reached the garden gate, it was with a fluttering heart that Adela scanned the premises for some accidental sign of her brother's presence. She felt that there would be an special fitness in his not having returned. She led the way in. The hall table was bare of his hat and overcoat. The only object it displayed was Mr. Perkin's card, which Adela had deposited there on her exit. All that was represented by that little white ticket seemed a thousand miles away. Finally, Mr. Moore's absence from his study was conclusive against his return.

As Adela went back thence into the drawing-room, she simply shook her head at Ludlow, who was standing before the fireplace; and as she did so, she caught her reflection in the mantle-glass. "Verily," she said to herself, "I have traveled far." She had pretty well unlearned the repose of the Veres of Vere. But she

was to break with it still more completely. It was with a singular hardihood that she prepared to redeem the little pledge which had been extorted from her on her way home. She felt that there was no trial to which her generosity might now be called which she would not hail with enthusiasm. Unfortunately, her generosity was not likely to be challenged; although she nevertheless had the satisfaction of assuring herself at this moment that, like the mercy of the Lord, it was infinite. Should she satisfy herself of her friend's? or should she leave it delightfully uncertain? These had been the terms of what had been called her temptation, at the foot of the hill. But inasmuch as Adela was by no means strictly engaged in the pursuit of pleasure, and as the notion of a grain of suffering was by no means repugnant to her, she had resolved to obtain possession of the one essential fact of her case, even though she should be at heavy costs to maintain it.

"Well, I have very little time," said Ludlow; "I must get my dinner and pay my bill and drive to the train." And he put out his hand.

Adela gave him her own, and looked him full in the eyes. "You are in a great hurry," said she.

"It's not I who am in a hurry. It's my confounded destiny. It's the train and the steamer."

"If you really wished to stay you wouldn't be bullied by the train and the steamer."

"Very true—very true. But *do* I really wish to stay?"

"That's the question. That's what I want to know."

"You ask difficult questions, Miss Moore."

"I mean they shall be difficult."

"Then, of course, you are prepared to answer difficult ones."

"I don't know that that's of course, but I am."

"Well, then, do you wish me to stay? All I have to do is to throw down my hat, sit down and fold my arms for twenty minutes. I lose my train and my ship. I stay in America, instead of going to Europe."

"I have thought of all that."

"I don't mean to say it's a great deal. There are pleasures and pleasures."

"Yes, and especially the former. It is a great deal."

"And you invite me to accept it?"

"No; I ought not to say that. What I ask of you is whether,

if I should so invite you, you would say 'yes.' "

"That makes the matter very easy for you, Miss Moore. What attractions do you hold out?"

"I hold out nothing whatever, sir."

"I suppose that means a great deal."

"It means what it seems to mean."

"Well, you are certainly a most interesting woman, Miss Moore—a charming woman."

"Why don't you call me 'fascinating' at once, and bid me good morning?"

"I don't know but that I shall have to come to that. But I will give you no answer that leaves you at an advantage. Ask me to stay—command me to stay, if that suits you better—and I will see how it sounds. Come, you must not trifle with a man." He still held Adela's hand, and they had been looking frankly into each other's eyes. He paused, waiting for an answer.

"Good-by, Mr. Ludlow," said Adela. "God bless you!" And she was about to withdraw her hand; but he held it.

"Are we friends?" said he.

Adela gave a little shrug of her shoulders. "Friends of three hours."

Ludlow looked at her with some sternness. "Our parting could at best hardly have been sweet," said he; "but why should you make it bitter, Miss Moore?"

"If it's bitter, why should you try to change it?"

"Because I don't like bitter things."

Ludlow had caught a glimpse of the truth—that truth of which the reader has had a glimpse—and he stood there at once thrilled and annoyed. He had both a heart and a conscience. "It's not my fault," he cried to the latter; but he was unable to add, in all consistency, that it was his misfortune. It would be very heroic, very poetic, very chivalric, to lose his steamer, and he felt that he could do so for sufficient cause—at the suggestion of a fact. But the motive here was less than a fact—an idea; less than an idea—a fancy. "It's a very pretty little romance as it is," he said to himself. "Why spoil it? She is an admirable girl: to have learned that is enough for me." He raised her hand to his lips, pressed them to it, dropped it, reached the door and bounded out of the garden gate.

The day was ended.

FRANCIS BRET HARTE

1839-1902

Born in New York, the son of a professor of Greek. After his father's death went to California, where he worked as express-messenger, miner, printer, teacher, secretary of the San Francisco mint, and editor of the "Overland Monthly," wherein he published poems, stories, and sketches which attracted attention even in Europe. Later became professor at the University of California, then held several government positions, and finally went to live in England where he died. He was a master of the short story and a powerful portrayer of character. "The Luck of Roaring Camp" is his best known work.

THE OUTCASTS OF POKER FLAT

AS Mr. John Oakhurst, gambler, stepped into the main street of Poker Flat on the morning of the 23rd of November, 1850, he was conscious of a change in its moral atmosphere since the preceding night. Two or three men, conversing earnestly together, ceased as he approached, and exchanged significant glances. There was a Sabbath lull in the air, which, in a settlement unused to Sabbath influences, looked ominous.

Mr. Oakhurst's calm, handsome face betrayed small concern in these indications. Whether he was conscious of any predisposing cause was another question. "I reckon they're after somebody," he reflected; "likely it's me." He returned to his pocket the handkerchief with which he had been whipping away the red dust of Poker Flat from his neat boots, and quietly discharged his mind of any further conjecture.

In point of fact, Poker Flat was "after somebody." It had lately suffered the loss of several thousand dollars, two valuable horses, and a prominent citizen. It was experiencing a spasm of virtuous reaction, quite as lawless and ungovernable as any of the acts that had provoked it. A secret committee had determined to rid the town of all improper persons. This was done permanently in regard of two men who were then hanging from the boughs of a sycamore in the gulch, and temporarily in the banishment of certain other objectionable characters. I regret to say that some of these were ladies. It is but due to the sex, however, to state that their impropriety was professional, and it

was only in such easily established standards of evil that Poker Flat ventured to sit in judgment.

Mr. Oakhurst was right in supposing that he was included in this category. A few of the committee had urged hanging him as a possible example and a sure method of reimbursing themselves from his pockets of the sums he had won from them. "It's agin justice," said Jim Wheeler, "to let this yer young man from Roaring Camp—an entire stranger—carry away our money." But a crude sentiment of equity residing in the breasts of those who had been fortunate enough to win from Mr. Oakhurst overruled this narrower local prejudice.

Mr. Oakhurst received his sentence with philosophic calmness, none the less coolly that he was aware of the hesitation of his judges. He was too much of a gambler not to accept fate. With him life was at best an uncertain game, and he recognized the usual percentage in favor of the dealer.

A body of armed men accompanied the deported wickedness of Poker Flat to the outskirts of the settlement. Besides Mr. Oakhurst, who was known to be a coolly desperate man, and for whose intimidation the armed escort was intended, the ex-patriated party consisted of a young woman familiarly known as "The Duchess;" another who had won the title of "Mother Shipton;" and "Uncle Billy," a suspected sluice-robber and confirmed drunkard. The calvacade provoked no comments from the spectators, nor was any word uttered by the escort. Only when the gulch which marked the uttermost limit of Poker Flat was reached, the leader spoke briefly and to the point. The exiles were forbidden to return at the peril of their lives.

As the escort disappeared, their pent-up feelings found vent in a few hysterical tears from the Duchess, some bad language from Mother Shipton, and a Parthian volley of expletives from Uncle Billy. The philosophic Oakhurst alone remained silent. He listened calmly to Mother Shipton's desire to cut somebody's heart out, to the repeated statements of the Duchess that she would die in the road, and to the alarming oaths that seemed to be bumped out of Uncle Billy as he rode forward. With the easy good humor characteristic of his class, he insisted upon exchanging his own riding-horse, "Five-Spot," for the sorry mule which the Duchess rode. But even this act did not draw the party into any closer sympathy. The young woman readjusted her some-

what draggled plumes with a feeble, faded coquetry; Mother Shipton eyed the possessor of "Five-Spot" with malevolence, and Uncle Billy included the whole party in one sweeping anathema.

The road to Sandy Bar—a camp that, not having as yet experienced the regenerating influences of Poker Flat, consequently seemed to offer some invitation to the emigrants—lay over a steep mountain range. It was distant a day's severe travel. In that advanced season the party soon passed out of the moist, temperate regions of the foothills into the dry, cold, bracing air of the Sierras. The trail was narrow and difficult. At noon the Duchess, rolling out of her saddle upon the ground, declared her intention of going no farther, and the party halted.

The spot was singularly wild and impressive. A wooded amphitheatre, surrounded on three sides by precipitous cliffs of naked granite, sloped gently toward the crest of another precipice that overlooked the valley. It was, undoubtedly, the most suitable spot for a camp, had camping been advisable. But Mr. Oakhurst knew that scarcely half the journey to Sandy Bar was accomplished, and the party were not equipped or provisioned for delay. This fact he pointed out to his companions curtly, with a philosophic commentary on the folly of "throwing up their hand before the game was played out." But they were furnished with liquor, which in this emergency stood them in place of food, fuel, rest, and prescience. In spite of his remonstrances, it was not long before they were more or less under its influence. Uncle Billy passed rapidly from a bellicose state into one of stupor, the Duchess became maudlin, and Mother Shipton snored. Mr. Oakhurst alone remained erect, leaning against a rock, calmly surveying them.

Mr. Oakhurst did not drink. It interfered with a profession which required coolness, impassiveness, and presence of mind, and, in his own language, he "couldn't afford it." As he gazed at his recumbent fellow exiles, the loneliness begotten of his pariah trade, his habits of life, his very vices, for the first time seriously oppressed him. He bestirred himself in dusting his black clothes, washing his hands and face, and other acts characteristic of his studiously neat habits, and for a moment forgot his annoyance. The thought of deserting his weaker and more pitiable companions never perhaps occurred to him. Yet he could not help feeling the want of that excitement which, singularly

enough, was most conducive to that calm equanimity for which he was notorious. He looked at the gloomy walls that rose a thousand feet sheer above the circling pines around him, at the sky ominously clouded, at the valley below, already deepening into shadow; and, doing so, suddenly he heard his own name called.

A horseman slowly ascended the trail. In the fresh open face of the newcomer Mr. Oakhurst recognized Tom Simson, otherwise known as "The Innocent," of Sandy Bar. He had met him some months before over a "little game," and had, with perfect equanimity, won the entire fortune—amounting to some forty dollars—of that guileless youth. After the game was finished, Mr. Oakhurst drew the youthful spectator behind the door and thus addressed him: "Tommy, you're a good little man, but you can't gamble worth a cent. Don't try it over again." He then handed him his money back, pushed him gently from the room, and so made a devoted slave of Tom Simson.

There was a remembrance of this in his boyish and enthusiastic greeting of Mr. Oakhurst. He had started, he said, to go to Poker Flat to seek his fortune. "Alone?" No, not exactly alone; in fact (a giggle), he had run away with Piney Woods. Didn't Mr. Oakhurst remember Piney? She that used to wait on the table at the Temperance House? They had been engaged a long time, but old Jake Woods had objected, and so they had run away, and were going to Poker Flat to be married, and here they were. And they were tired out, and how lucky it was they had found a place to camp, and company. All this the Innocent delivered rapidly, while Piney, a stout, comely damsel of fifteen, emerged from behind the pine tree, where she had been blushing unseen, and rode to the side of her lover.

Mr. Oakhurst seldom troubled himself with sentiment, still less with propriety; but he had a vague idea that the situation was not fortunate. He retained, however, his presence of mind sufficiently to kick Uncle Billy, who was about to say something, and Uncle Billy was sober enough to recognize in Mr. Oakhurst's kick a superior power that would not bear trifling. He then endeavored to dissuade Tom Simson from delaying further, but in vain. He even pointed out the fact that there was no provision, nor means of making a camp. But, unluckily, the Innocent met this objection by assuring the party that he was provided with

an extra mule loaded with provisions and by the discovery of a rude attempt at a log house near the trail. "Piney can stay with Mrs. Oakhurst," said the Innocent, pointing to the Duchess, "and I can shift for myself."

Nothing but Mr. Oakhurst's admonishing foot saved Uncle Billy from bursting into a roar of laughter. As it was, he felt compelled to retire up the cañon until he could recover his gravity. There he confided the joke to the tall pine trees, with many slaps of his leg, contortions of his face, and the usual profanity. But when he returned to the party, he found them seated by a fire—for the air had grown strangely chill and the sky overcast—in apparently amicable conversation. Piney was actually talking in an impulsive girlish fashion to the Duchess, who was listening with an interest and animation she had not shown for many days. The Innocent was holding forth, apparently with equal effect, to Mr. Oakhurst and Mother Shipton, who was actually relaxing into amiability. "Is this yer a d—d picnic?" said Uncle Billy, with inward scorn, as he surveyed the sylvan group, the glancing firelight, and the tethered animals in the foreground. Suddenly an idea mingled with the alcoholic fumes that disturbed his brain. It was apparently of a jocular nature, for he felt impelled to slap his leg again and cram his fist into his mouth.

As the shadows crept slowly up the mountain, a slight breeze rocked the tops of the pine trees and moaned through their long and gloomy aisles. The ruined cabin, patched and covered with pine boughs, was set apart for the ladies. As the lovers parted, they unaffectedly exchanged a kiss, so honest and sincere that it might have been heard above the swaying pines. The frail Duchess and the malevolent Mother Shipton were probably too stunned to remark upon this last evidence of simplicity, and so turned without a word to the hut. The fire was replenished, the men lay down before the door, and in a few minutes were asleep.

Mr. Oakhurst was a light sleeper. Toward morning he awoke benumbed and cold. As he stirred the dying fire, the wind, which was now blowing strongly, brought to his cheek that which caused the blood to leave it—snow!

He started to his feet with the intention of awakening the sleepers, for there was no time to lose. But turning to where

Uncle Billy had been lying, he found him gone. A suspicion leaped to his brain, and a curse to his lips. He ran to the spot where the mules had been tethered—they were no longer there. The tracks were already rapidly disappearing in the snow.

The momentary excitement brought Mr. Oakhurst back to the fire with his usual calm. He did not waken the sleepers. The Innocent slumbered peacefully, with a smile on his good-humored, freckled face; the virgin Piney slept beside her frailer sisters as sweetly as though attended by celestial guardians; and Mr. Oakhurst, drawing his blanket over his shoulders, stroked his mustaches and waited for the dawn. It came slowly in a whirling mist of snowflakes that dazzled and confused the eye. What could be seen of the landscape appeared magically changed. He looked over the valley, and summed up the present and future in two words, "Snowed in!"

A careful inventory of the provisions, which, fortunately for the party, had been stored within the hut, and so escaped the felonious fingers of Uncle Billy, disclosed the fact that with care and prudence they might last ten days longer. "That is," said Mr. Oakhurst *sotto voce* to the Innocent, "if you're willing to board us. If you ain't—and perhaps you'd better not—you can wait till Uncle Billy gets back with provisions." For some occult reason, Mr. Oakhurst could not bring himself to disclose Uncle Billy's rascality, and so offered the hypothesis that he had wandered from the camp and had accidentally stampeded the animals. He dropped a warning to the Duchess and Mother Shipton, who of course knew the facts of their associate's defection. "They'll find out the truth about us *all* when they find out anything," he added significantly, "and there's no good frightening them now."

Tom Simson not only put all his worldly store at the disposal of Mr. Oakhurst, but seemed to enjoy the prospect of their enforced seclusion. "We'll have a good camp for a week, and then the snow'll melt, and we'll all go back together." The cheerful gayety of the young man and Mr. Oakhurst's calm infected the others. The Innocent, with the aid of pine boughs, extemporized a thatch for the roofless cabin, and the Duchess directed Piney in the rearrangement of the interior with a taste and tact that opened the blue eyes of that provincial maiden to their fullest extent. "I reckon now you're used to fine things

at Poker Flat," said Piney. The Duchess turned away sharply to conceal something that reddened her cheeks through their professional tint, and Mother Shipton requested Piney not to "chatter." But when Mr. Oakhurst returned from a weary search for the trail, he heard the sound of happy laughter echoed from the rocks. He stopped in some alarm, and his thoughts first naturally reverted to the whiskey, which he had prudently cachéd. "And yet it don't somehow sound like whiskey," said the gambler. It was not until he caught sight of the blazing fire through the still blinding storm, and the group around it, that he settled to the conviction that it was "square fun."

Whether Mr. Oakhurst had cachéd his cards with the whiskey as something debarred the free access of the community, I cannot say. It was certain that, in Mother Shipton's words, he "didn't say 'cards' once" during that evening. Happily the time was beguiled by an accordion, produced somewhat ostentatiously by Tom Simson from his pack. Notwithstanding some difficulties attending the manipulation of this instrument, Piney Woods managed to pluck several reluctant melodies from its keys, to an accompaniment by the Innocent on a pair of bone castanets. But the crowning festivity of the evening was reached in a rude camp-meeting hymn, which the lovers, joining hands, sang with great earnestness and vociferation. I fear that a certain defiant tone and Covenanter's swing to its chorus, rather than any devotional quality, caused it speedily to infect the others, who at last joined in the refrain:

"I'm proud to live in the service of the Lord,
And I'm bound to die in His army."

The pines rocked, the storm eddied and whirled above the miserable group, and the flames of their altar leaped heavenward, as if in token of the vow.

At midnight the storm abated, the rolling clouds parted, and the stars glittered keenly above the sleeping camp. Mr. Oakhurst, whose professional habits had enabled him to live on the smallest possible amount of sleep, in dividing the watch with Tom Simson somehow managed to take upon himself the greater part of that duty. He excused himself to the Innocent by saying that he had "often been a week without sleep." "Doing what?" asked Tom. "Poker!" replied Oakhurst sententiously. "When a

man gets a streak of luck—nigger-luck—he don't get tired. The luck gives in first. Luck," continued the gambler reflectively, "is a mighty queer thing. All you know about it for certain is that it's bound to change. And it's finding out when it's going to change that makes you. We've had a streak of bad luck since we left Poker Flat—you come along, and slap you get into it, too. If you can hold your cards right along you're all right. For," added the gambler, with cheerful irrelevance—

"I'm proud to live in the service of the Lord,
And I'm bound to die in His army."

The third day came, and the sun, looking through the white-curtained valley, saw the outcasts divide their slowly decreasing store of provisions for the morning meal. It was one of the peculiarities of that mountain climate that its rays diffused a kindly warmth over the wintry landscape, as if in regretful commiseration of the past. But it revealed drift on drift of snow piled high around the hut—a hopeless, uncharted, trackless sea of white lying below the rocky shores to which the castaways still clung. Through the marvelously clear air the smoke of the pastoral village of Poker Flat rose miles away. Mother Shipton saw it, and from a remote pinnacle of her rocky fastness hurled in that direction a final malediction. It was her last vituperative attempt, and perhaps for that reason was invested with a certain degree of sublimity. It did her good, she privately informed the Duchess. "Just you go out there and cuss, and see." She then set herself to the task of amusing "the child," as she and the Duchess were pleased to call Piney. Piney was no chicken, but it was a soothing and original theory of the pair thus to account for the fact that she didn't swear and wasn't improper.

When night crept up again through the gorges, the reedy notes of the accordion rose and fell in fitful spasms and long-drawn gasps by the flickering camp-fire. But music failed to fill entirely the aching void left by insufficient food, and a new diversion was proposed by Piney—story-telling. Neither Mr. Oakhurst nor his female companions caring to relate their personal experiences, this plan would have failed too, but for the Innocent. Some months before he had chanced upon a stray copy of Mr. Pope's ingenious translation of the *Iliad*. He now

proposed to narrate the principal incidents of that poem—having thoroughly mastered the argument and fairly forgotten the words—in the current vernacular of Sandy Bar. And so for the rest of that night the Homeric demigods again walked the earth. Trojan bully and wily Greek wrestled in the winds, and the great pines in the cañon seemed to bow to the wrath of the son of Peleus. Mr. Oakhurst listened with quiet satisfaction. Most especially was he interested in the fate of "Ashheels," as the Innocent persisted in denominating the "swift-footed Achilles."

So, with small food and much of Homer and the accordion, a week passed over the heads of the outcasts. The sun again forsook them, and again from leaden skies the snowflakes were sifted over the land. Day by day closer around them drew the snowy circle, until at last they looked from their prison over drifted walls of dazzling white, that towered twenty feet above their heads. It became more and more difficult to replenish their fires, even from the fallen trees beside them, now half hidden in the drifts. And yet no one complained. The lovers turned from the dreary prospect and looked into each other's eyes, and were happy. Mr. Oakhurst settled himself coolly to the losing game before him. The Duchess, more cheerful than she had been, assumed the care of Piney. Only Mother Shipton—once the strongest of the party—seemed to sicken and fade. At midnight on the tenth day she called Oakhurst to her side. "I'm going," she said, in a voice of querulous weakness, "but don't say anything about it. Don't waken the kids. Take the bundle from under my head, and open it." Mr. Oakhurst did so. It contained Mother Shipton's rations for the last week, untouched. "Give 'em to the child," she said, pointing to the sleeping Piney. "You've starved yourself," said the gambler. "That's what they call it," said the woman querulously, as she lay down again, and, turning her face to the wall, passed quietly away.

The accordion and the bones were put aside that day, and Homer was forgotten. When the body of Mother Shipton had been committed to the snow, Mr. Oakhurst took the Innocent aside, and showed him a pair of snowshoes, which he had fashioned from the old pack-saddle. "There's one chance in a hundred to save her yet," he said, pointing to Piney; "but it's there," he added, pointing toward Poker Flat. "If you can reach there in two days she's safe." "And you?" asked Tom Simson. "I'll

stay here," was the curt reply.

The lovers parted with a long embrace. "You are not going, too?" said the Duchess, as she saw Mr. Oakhurst apparently waiting to accompany him. "As far as the cañon," he replied. He turned suddenly and kissed the Duchess, leaving her pallid face aflame, and her trembling limbs rigid with amazement.

Night came, but not Mr. Oakhurst. It brought the storm again and the whirling snow. Then the Duchess, feeding the fire, found that some one had quietly piled beside the hut enough fuel to last a few days longer. The tears rose to her eyes, but she hid them from Piney.

The women slept but little. In the morning, looking into each other's faces, they read their fate. Neither spoke, but Piney, accepting the position of the stronger, drew near and placed her arm around the Duchess's waist. They kept this attitude for the rest of the day. That night the storm reached its greatest fury, and, rending asunder the protecting vines, invaded the very hut.

Toward morning they found themselves unable to feed the fire, which gradually died away. As the embers slowly blackened, the Duchess crept closer to Piney, and broke the silence of many hours: "Piney, can you pray?" "No, dear," said Piney simply. The Duchess, without knowing exactly why, felt relieved, and, putting her head upon Piney's shoulder, spoke no more. And so reclining, the younger and purer pillowing the head of her soiled sister upon her virgin breast, they fell asleep.

The wind lolled as if it feared to waken them. Feathery drifts of snow, shaken from the long pine boughs, flew like white winged birds, and settled about them as they slept. The moon through the rifted clouds looked down upon what had been the camp. But all human stain, all trace of earthly travail, was hidden beneath the spotless mantle mercifully flung from above.

They slept all that day and the next, nor did they waken when voices and footsteps broke the silence of the camp. And when pitying fingers brushed the snow from their wan faces, you could scarcely have told from the equal peace that dwelt upon them which was she that had sinned. Even the law of Poker Flat recognized this, and turned away, leaving them still locked in each other's arms.

But at the head of the gulch, on one of the largest pine trees, they found the deuce of clubs pinned to the bark with a bowie-knife. It bore the following, written in pencil in a firm hand:

†
BENEATH THIS TREE
LIES THE BODY
OF
JOHN OAKHURST,
WHO STRUCK A STREAK OF BAD LUCK
ON THE 23D OF NOVEMBER, 1850,
AND
HANDED IN HIS CHECKS
ON THE 7TH OF DECEMBER, 1850.
†

And pulseless and cold, with a Derringer by his side, and a bullet in his heart, though still calm as in life, beneath the snow lay he who was at once the strongest and yet the weakest of the outcasts of Poker Flat.

ARABIAN NIGHTS

The Arabian Nights' Entertainment, or the Thousand and One Nights, is a collection of oriental tales as old as the orient itself. When and by whom they were first written down is not known. They are probably the work of a number of poets and story-tellers. The western world first became acquainted with them through the translation of Antoine Gallard, a great French orientalist, in 1704, and has ever since read them with delight.

THE STORY OF JULLANAR OF THE SEA

HERE was, in olden time, and in an ancient age and period, in the land of the Persians, a King named Shah-Zeman, and the place of his residence was Khurasan. He had a hundred concubines; but he had not been blest, during his whole life, with a male child by any of them, nor a female; and he reflected upon this, one day, and lamented that the greater portion of his life had passed, and he had not been blessed with a male child to inherit the kingdom after him as he had inherited it from his fathers and forefathers. So the utmost grief, and violent vexation, befell him on this account.

Now while he was sitting one day, one of his memluks came in to him, and said to him, O my lord, at the door is a slave-girl with a merchant: none more beautiful than she hath been seen. And he replied, Bring to me the merchant and the slave-girl. The merchant and the slave-girl therefore came to him; and when he saw her, he found her to resemble the Rudeyni¹ lance. She was wrapped in an izar of silk embroidered with gold, and the merchant uncovered her face, whereupon the place was illuminated by her beauty, and there hung down from her forehead seven locks of hair reaching to her anklets, like the tails of horses. She had eyes bordered with kohl, and heavy hips, and slender waist: she was such as would cure the malady of the sick, and extinguish the fire of the thirsty, and was as the poet hath said in these verses:—

I am enamoured of her; she is perfect in beauty, and perfect also in gravity and in dignity.
She is neither tall nor short; but her hips are such that the izar is too narrow for them.

¹Rudeyneh, a fabulous character famous for making straight spearshafts

Her stature is a mean between the small and the large: so there is neither tallness nor shortness to find fault with.

Her hair reacheth to her ankles, and is black as night, but her face is ever like the day.

The King, therefore wondered at the sight of her, and at her beauty and 'loveliness, and her stature and justness of form; and he said to the merchant, O sheykh, for how much is this damsel to be sold? The merchant answered, O my lord, I purchased her for two thousand pieces of gold of the merchant who owned her before me, and I have been for three years travelling with her, and she hath cost, to the period of her arrival at this place, three thousand pieces of gold; and she is a present from me unto thee. Upon this, the King conferred upon him a magnificent robe of honor, and gave orders to present him with ten thousand pieces of gold. So he took them, and kissed the hands of the King, thanking him for his bounty and beneficence, and departed. Then the King committed the damsel to the tirewomen, saying to them, Amend the state of this damsel, and deck her, and furnish for her a private chamber, and take her into it. He also gave orders to his chamberlains that every thing which she required should be conveyed to her. The seat of government where he resided was on the shore of the sea, and his city was called the White City. And they conducted the damsel into a private chamber, which chamber had windows overlooking the sea; and the King commanded his chamberlains to close all the doors upon her after taking to her all that she required.

The King then went in to visit^t the damsel; but she rose not to him, nor took any notice of him. So the King said, It seemeth that she hath been with people who have not taught her good manners. And looking at the damsel, he saw her to be a person surpassing in beauty and loveliness, and in stature and justness of form; her face was like the disk of the moon at the full, or the shining sun in the clear sky; and he wondered at her beauty and loveliness, and stature and justness of form, extolling the perfection of God, the Creator: lauded be his power! Then the King advanced to the damsel, and eated himself by her side, pressed her to his bosom, and seated her upon his thigh; and he kissed her lips, which he found to be sweeter than honey. After this, he gave orders to bring tables of the richest viands, comprising dishes of every kind; and the King ate, and put

morsels into her mouth until she was satisfied, but she spoke not a single word. The King talked to her, and inquired of her her name; but she was silent, not uttering a word, nor returning him an answer, ceasing not to hang down her head towards the ground; and what protected her from the anger of the King was the excess of her beauty and loveliness, and her tenderness of manner. So the King said within himself, Extolled be the perfection of God, the Creator of this damsel! How elegant is she, saving that she doth not speak! But perfection belongeth unto God, whose name be exalted!—Then the King asked the female slaves whether she had spoken; and they answered him, From the time of her arrival to the present moment she hath not spoken one word, and we have not heard her talk. The King therefore caused some of the female slaves and concubines to come, and ordered them to sing to her, and to make merry with her, thinking that then she might perhaps speak. Accordingly the female slaves and concubines played before her with all kinds of musical instruments, and enacted sports and other performances, and they sang so that every one who was present was moved with delight, except the damsel, who looked at them and was silent, neither laughing nor speaking. So the heart of the King was contracted. He however inclined to her entirely, paying no regard to others, but relinquishing all the rest of his concubines and favorites.

He remained with her a whole year, which seemed as one day, and still she spoke not; and he said to her one day, when his love of her, and his passion, were excessive, O desire of souls, verily the love that I have for thee is great, and I have relinquished for thy sake all my female slaves, and the concubines and the women and the favorites, and made thee my worldly portion, and been patient with thee a whole year. I beg God (whose name be exalted!) that He will, in his grace, soften thy heart towards me, and that thou mayest speak to me. Or, if thou be dumb, inform me by a sign, that I may give up hope of thy speaking. I also beg of God (whose perfection be extolled!) that He will bless me by thee with a male child that may inherit my kingdom after me; for I am single and solitary, having none to be my heir, and my age hath become great. I conjure thee then by Allah, if thou love me, that thou return me a reply.—And upon this, the damsel hung down her head towards

the ground, meditating. Then she raised her head, and smiled in the face of the King, whereat it appeared to the King that lightning filled the private chamber; and she said, O magnanimous King, and bold lion, God hath answered thy prayer; for I am about to bear thee issue, and the time is almost come. But I know not whether the child is male or female. And were it not for my being in this state, I had not spoken to thee one word.—And when the King heard what she said, his face brightened up with joy and happiness, and he kissed her head and her hands by reason of the violence of his joy, and said, Praise be to God who hath favored me with things that I desired; the first, thy speaking; and the second, thy information that thou art about to bear me issue. Then the King arose and went forth from her, and seated himself upon the throne of his kingdom in a state of exceeding happiness; and he ordered the Wezir to give out to the poor and the needy and the widows and others a hundred thousand pieces of gold as a thank-offering to God (whose name be exalted!) and an alms on his part. So the Wezir did as the King had commanded him. And after that, the King went in to the damsel, and sat with her, and embraced her and pressed her to his bosom, saying to her, O my mistress, who ownest me as thy slave, wherefore hath been this silence, seeing that thou hast been with me a whole year, night and day, awake and asleep, yet hast not spoken to me during this year except on this day? What then hath been the cause of thy silence?

The damsel answered, Hear, O King of the age, and know that I am a poor person, a stranger, broken-hearted: I have become separated from my mother and my family and my brother. And when the King heard her words, he knew her desire, and he replied, As to thy saying that thou art poor, there is no occasion for such an assertion; for all my kingdom and my goods and possessions are at thy service, and I also have become thy memluk: and as to thy saying, I have become separated from my mother and my family and my brother—inform me in what place they are, and I will send to them, and bring them to thee. So she said to him, Know, O fortunate King, that my name is Jullanar of the Sea. My father was one of the Kings of the Sea, and he died, and left to us the kingdom; but while we were enjoying it, one of the Kings came upon us, and took the kingdom from our hands. I have also a brother named Salih, and

my mother is of the women of the sea; and I quarrelled with my brother, and swore that I would throw myself into the hands of a man of the inhabitants of the land. Accordingly I came forth from the sea, and sat upon the shore of an island in the moonlight, and there passed by me a man who took me and conducted me to his abode, and desired to make me his concubine; but I smote him upon his head, and he almost died; wherefore he went and sold me to this man from whom thou tookest me, and he was an excellent, virtuous man, a person of religion and fidelity and kindness. But had not thy heart loved me, and hadst thou not preferrec^d me above all thy concubines, I had not remained with thee one hour; for I should have cast myself into the sea from this window, and gone to my mother and my people. I was ashamed, however, to go to them in the state in which I am; for they would imagine evil of me, and would not believe me, even though I should swear to them, were I to tell them that a King had purchased me with his money, and had made me his worldly portion, and chosen me in preference to his wives and all that his right hand possessed. This is my story, and peace be on thee!—And when he heard her words, he thanked her, and kissed her between her eyes, and said to her, By Allah, O my mistress, and light of my eyes, I cannot endure thy separation for one hour; and if thou quit me, I shall die instantly. How then shall the affair be?—She answered, O my master, the time of the birth is near, and my family must come.—And how, said the King, do they walk in the sea without being wetted? She answered, We walk in the sea as ye walk upon the land, through the influence of the names engraved upon the seal of Suleyman the son of Da'ud, upon both of whom be peace! But, O King, when my family and my brethren come, I will inform them that thou boughtest me with thy money, and hast treated me with kindness and beneficence, and it will be meet that thou confirm my assertion to them. They will also see thy state with their eyes, and will know that thou art a King, the son of a King.—And thereupon the King said, O my mistress, do what seemeth fit to thee, and what thou wishest; for I will comply with thy desire in all that thou wilt do. And the damsel said, Know, O King of the age, that we walk in the sea with our eyes open, and see what is in it, and we see the sun and the moon and the stars and the sky as on the face of the earth, and this

hurteth us not. Know also, that in the sea are many peoples and various forms of all the kinds that are on the land; and know, moreover, that all that is on the land, in comparison with what is in the sea, is a very small matter.—And the King wondered at her words.

Then the damsel took forth from her shoulders two pieces of Kamari aloes-wood, and took a bit of them, and, having lighted a fire in a perfuming-vessel, threw into it that bit, and she uttered a loud whistle, and proceeded to speak words which no one understood; whereupon a great smoke arose, while the King looked on. After this, she said to the King, O my lord, arise and conceal thyself in a closet, that I may shew thee my brother and my mother and my family without their seeing thee; for I desire to bring them, and thou shalt see in this place, at this time, a wonder, and shalt wonder at the various shapes and strange forms that God (whose name be exalted!) hath created. So the King arose immediately, and entered a closet, and looked to see what she would do. And she proceeded to burn perfume and repeat spells until the sea foamed and was agitated, and there came forth from it a young man of comely form, of beautiful countenance, like the moon at the full, with shining forehead, and red cheek, and hair resembling pearls and jewels; he was, of all the creation, the most like to his sister, and the tongue of the case itself seemed to recite in his praise these verses:—

The moon becometh perfect once in each month; but the loveliness of thy face is perfect every day.

Its abode is in the heart of one sign at a time; but thine abode is in all hearts at once.

Afterwards, there came forth from the sea a grizzly-haired old woman, and with her five damsels, resembling moons, and bearing a likeness to the damsel whose name was Jullanar. Then the King saw the young man and the old woman and the damsels walk upon the surface of the water until they came to the damsel Jullanar; and when they drew near to the window, and Jullanar beheld them, she rose to them and met them with joy and happiness. On their seeing her, they knew her, and they went in to her and embraced her, weeping violently; and they said to her, O Jullanar, how is it that thou leavest us for four years, and we know not the place in which thou art? By Allah, the world was contracted unto us, by reason of the distress occasioned by thy

separation, and we had no delight in food nor in drink a single day, weeping night and day on account of the excess of our longing to see thee.—Then the damsel began to kiss the hand of the young man her brother, and the hand of her mother, and so also the hands of the daughters of her uncle, and they sat with her a while, asking her respecting her state, and the things that had happened to her, and her present condition.

So she said to them, Know ye, that when I quitted you, and came forth from the sea, I sat upon the shore of an island, and a man took me, and sold me to a merchant, and the merchant brought me to this city, and sold me to its King for ten thousand pieces of gold. Then he treated me with attention, and forsook all his concubines and his women and his favorites for my sake, and was diverted by his regard for me from every thing that he possessed and what was in this city.—And when her brother heard her words, he said, Praise be to God who hath reunited us with thee! But it is my desire, O my sister, that thou wouldest arise and go with us to our country and our family.—So when the King heard the words of her brother, his reason fled in consequence of his fear lest the damsel should accept the proposal of her brother, and he could not prevent her, though he was inflamed with love of her; wherefore he became perplexed, in violent fear of her separation. But as to the damsel Jullanar, on hearing the words of her brother, she said, By Allah, O my brother the man who purchased me is the King of this city, and he is a great King, and a man of wisdom, generous, of the utmost liberality. He hath treated me with honor, and he is a person of kindness, and of great wealth, but hath no male child nor a female. He hath shewn favor to me, and acted well to me in every respect; and from the day when I came to him to the present time, I have not heard from him a bad word to grieve my heart; but he hath not ceased to treat me with courtesy, and hath done nothing without consulting me, and I am living with him in the best of states, and the most perfect of enjoyments. Moreover, if I quitted him, he would perish: for he can never endure my separation even for a single hour. I also, if I quitted him, should die, by reason of the violence of my love for him in consequence of the excess of his kindness to me during the period of my residence with him; for if my father were living, my condition with him would not be like my condition with

this great, glorious King. Ye have seen, too, that I am about to bear him issue; and praise be to God who hath made me to be a daughter of a King of the Sea, and my husband the greatest of the Kings of the Land. God, (whose name be exalted!) afflicted me not, but compensated me well; and as the King hath not a male child nor a female, I beg God (whose name be exalted!) to bless me with a male child that may inherit of this great King these buildings and palaces and possessions of which God hath made him owner.—And when her brother and the daughters of her uncle heard her words, their eyes became cheerful thereat, and they said to her, O Jullanar, thou knowest the place which thou hast in our estimation, and art acquainted with our affection for thee, and thou art assured that thou art the dearest of all persons to us, and art certain that we desire for thee comfort, without trouble or toil. Therefore if thou be not in a state of comfort, arise and accompany us to our country and our family; but if thou be comfortable here, in honor and happiness, this is our desire and wish; for we desire not aught save thy comfort in every respect.—And Jullanar replied, By Allah, I am in a state of the utmost comfort and enjoyment, in honor and desirable happiness. So when the King heard these words from her, he rejoiced, and his heart became tranquillized, and he thanked her for them; his love for her increased, and penetrated to his heart's core, and he knew that she loved him as he loved her, and that she desired to remain with him to see his child which she was to bear him.

Then the damsel Jullanar of the Sea gave orders to the female slaves to bring forward the tables and the viands of all kinds; and Jullanar herself was the person who superintended the preparation of the viands in the kitchen. So the female slaves brought to them the viands and the sweetmeats and the fruits; and she ate with her family. But afterwards they said to her, O Jullanar, thy master is a man who is a stranger to us, and we have entered his abode without his permission and without his knowledge of us, and thou praisest to us his excellence, and hast also brought to us his food, and we have eaten, but have not had an interview with him, nor seen him, nor hath he seen us, nor come into our presence, nor eaten with us, that the bond of bread and salt might be established between us. And they all desisted from eating, and were enraged at her, and fire began

to issue from their mouths as from cresses. So when the King beheld this, his reason fled, in consequence of the violence of his fear of them. Then Jullanar rose to them, and soothed their hearts; after which she walked along until she entered the closet in which was the King her master; and she said to him, O my master, didst thou see, and didst thou hear my thanks to thee, and my praise of thee in the presence of my family; and didst thou hear what they said to me, that they desired to take me with them to our family and our country? The King answered her, I heard and saw. May God recompense thee for us well! By Allah, I knew not the extent of the love that thou feelest for me until this blessed hour, and I doubt not of thy love for me.—She replied, O my master, is the recompence of beneficence aught but beneficence? Thou hast treated me with beneficence, and bestowed upon me great favors, and I see that thou lovest me with the utmost love, and thou hast shewn me every kindness, and preferred me above all whom thou lovest and desirest. How then could my heart be happy to quit thee, and to depart from thee; and how could that be when thou bestowest benefits and favors upon me? Now I desire of thy goodness that thou come and salute my family, and see them, and that they may see thee, and that pleasure and mutual friendship may ensue. But know, O King of the age, that my brother and my mother and the daughters of my uncle have conceived a great love for thee in consequence of my praising thee to them, and they have said, We will not depart from thee to our country until we have an interview with the King, and salute him. So they desire to behold thee, and to become familiar with thee.—And the King said to her, I hear and obey; for this is what I desire. He then rose from his place, and went to them, and saluted them with the best salutation; and they hastened to rise to him; they met him in the most polite manner, and he sat with them in the pavilion, ate with them at the table, and remained with them for a period of thirty days. Then they desired to return to their country and abode. So they took leave of the King, and the Queen Jullanar of the Sea, and departed from them, after the King had treated them with the utmost honor.

After this, Jullanar fulfilled her period, and she gave birth to a boy, resembling the moon at the full, whereat the King experienced the utmost happiness, because he had not before been

blest with a son nor a daughter during his life. They continued the rejoicings, and the decorations of the city, for a period of seven days, in the utmost happiness and enjoyment; and on the seventh day, the mother of the Queen Jullanar, and her brother, and the daughters of her uncle, all came, when they knew that Jullanar had given birth to her child. The King met them, rejoicing at their arrival, and said to them, I said I would not name my son until ye should come, and that ye should name him according to your knowledge. And they named him Bedr Basim; all of them agreeing as to this name. They then presented the boy to his maternal uncle, Salih who took him upon his hands and rising with him from among them, walked about the palace to the right and left; after which, he went forth with him from the palace, descended with him to the sea, and walked on until he became concealed from the eye of the King. So when the King saw that he had taken his son, and disappeared from him at the bottom of the sea, he despaired of him, and began to weep and wail. But Jullanar, seeing him in this state, said to him O King of the age, fear not nor grieve for thy son; for I love my child more than thou, and my child is with my brother; therefore care not for the sea, nor fear his being drowned. If my brother knew that any injury would betide the little one, he had not done what he hath done; and presently he will bring thee thy son safe, if it be the will of God, whose name be exalted!—And but a short time had elapsed when the sea was agitated and disturbed, and the uncle of the little one came forth from it, having with him the King's son safe, and he flew from the sea until he came to them, with the little one on his arms, silent, and his face resembling the moon in the night of its fullness. Then the uncle of the little one looked towards the King, and said to him, Perhaps thou fearedst some injury to thy son when I descended into the sea, having him with me. So he replied, Yes, O my master, I feared for him, and I did not imagine that he would ever come forth from it safe. And Salih said to him, O King of the Land, we applied to his eyes a collyrium that we know, and repeated over him the names engraved upon the seal of Suleyman the Son of Da'ud (on both of whom be peace!); for when a child is born among us, we do to him as I have told thee. Fear not therefore, on his account, drowning, nor suffocation, nor all the seas if he descend unto them.

Like as ye walk upon the land, we walk in 'the sea.

He then took forth from his pocket a case, written upon, and sealed; and he broke its seal, and scattered its contents, whereupon there fell from it strung jewels, consisting of all kinds of jacinths and other gems, together with three hundred oblong emeralds, and three hundred oblong large jewels, of the size of the eggs of the ostrich, the light of which was more resplendent than the light of the sun and the moon. And he said, O King of the age, these jewels and jacinths are a present from me unto thee; for we never brought thee a present, because we knew not the place of Jullanar's abode, nor were acquainted with any trace or tidings of her. So when we saw thee to have become united to her, and that we all had become one, we brought thee this present; and after every period of a few days, we will bring thee the like of it, if it be the will of God, whose name be exalted! For these jewels and jacinths with us are more plentiful than the gravel upon the land, and we know the excellent among them, and the bad, and all the ways to them, and the places where they are found, and they are easy of access to us.—At first when the King looked at those jewels and jacinths, his reason was confounded and his mind was bewildered, and he said: By Allah, one of these jewels is worth my kingdom! Then the King thanked Salih of the Sea for his generosity, and, looking towards the Queen Jullanar, he said to her, I am abashed at thy brother; for he hath shewn favor to me, and presented me with this magnificent present, which the people of the earth would fail to procure. So Jullanar thanked her brother for that which he had done; but her brother said, O King of the age, thou hadst a prior claim upon us, and to thank thee hath been incumbent on us; for thou hast treated my sister with nefiscence, and we have entered thine abode, and eaten of thy provision; and the poet hath said:—

Had *I* wept before *she* did, in my passion for So'da, I had healed my soul before repentance came.

But *she* wept before *I* did: her tears drew mine; and I said, The merit belongs to the precedent.

Then Salih said, If we stood serving thee, O King of the age, a thousand years, regarding nothing else, we could not requite thee, and our doing so would be but a small thing in comparison with thy desert.—The King therefore thanked him eloquently.

And Salih remained with the King, he and his mother and the daughters of his uncle, forty days; after which he arose and kissed the ground before the King, the husband of his sister. So the King said to him, What dost thou desire, O Salih? And he answered, O King of the age, thou has conferred favors upon us, and we desire of thy goodness that thou wouldest grant us a boon, and give us permission to depart; for we have become desirous of seeing again our family and our country and our relations and our homes. We will not, however, relinquish the service of thee, nor that of my sister nor the son of my sister; and by Allah, O King of the age, to quit you is not pleasant to my heart; but how can we act, when we have been reared in the sea, and the land is not agreeable to us?—So when the King heard his words, he rose upon his feet, and bade farewell to Salih of the Sea and his mother and the daughters of his uncle, and they wept together on account of the separation. Then they said to the King, In a short time we shall be with you, and we will never relinquish you, but after every period of a few days we will visit you. And after this, they flew towards the sea, and descended into it, and disappeared.

The King treated Jullanar with beneficence, and honored her exceedingly, and the little one grew up well; and his maternal uncle, with his grandmother and the daughters of his uncle, after every period of a few days used to come to the residence of the King, and to remain with him a month, and two months, and then return to their places. The boy ceased not, with increase of age, to increase in beauty and loveliness until his age became fifteen years; and he was incomparable in his perfect beauty, and his stature and his justness of form. He had learned writing and reading, and history and grammar and philology, and archery; and he learned to play with the spear; and he also learned horsemanship, and all that the sons of the Kings required. There was not one of the children of the inhabitants of the city, men and women, that talked not of the charms of that young man; for he was of surpassing loveliness and perfection; and the King loved him greatly. Then the King summoned the Wezir and the emirs, and the lords of the empire, and the great men of the kingdom, and made them swear by binding oaths that they would make Bedr Basim King over them after his father; so they swore to him by binding oaths, and rejoiced

thereat; and the King himself was beneficent to the people, courteous in speech, of auspicious aspect, saying nothing but what was for the good of the people. And on the following day, the King mounted, together with the lords of the empire and all the emirs, and all the soldiers walked with him through the city and returned; and when they drew near to the palace, the King dismounted to wait upon his son, and he and all the emirs and the lords of the empire bore the ghashiyeh before him. Each one of the emirs and the lords of the empire bore the ghashiyeh a while; and they ceased not to proceed until they arrived at the vestibule of the palace; the King's son riding. Thereupon he alighted, and his father embraced him, he and the emirs, and they seated him upon the throne of the kingdom, while his father stood, as also did the emirs, before him. Then Bedr Basim judged the people, displaced the tyrannical and invested the just, and continued to give judgment until near midday, when he rose from the throne of the kingdom, and went in to his mother Jullanar of the Sea, having upon his head the crown, and resembling the moon. So when his mother saw him, and the King before him, she rose to him and kissed him, and congratulated him on his elevation to the dignity of Sultan; and she offered up a prayer in favor of him and his father for length of life, and victory over their enemies. He then sat with his mother and rested; and when the time of afternoon-prayers arrived, he rode with the emirs before him until he came to the horse-course, where he played with arms till the time of nightfall, together with his father and the lords of his empire; after which he returned to the palace, with all the people before him. Every day he used to ride to the horse-course; and when he returned, he sat to judge the people, and administered justice between the emir and the poor man. He ceased not to do thus for a whole year; and after that, he used to ride to the chase, and to go about through the cities and provinces that were under his rule, making proclamation of safety and security, and doing as do the Kings; and he was incomparable among the people of his age in glory and courage, and in justice to the people.

Now it came to pass that the old King, the father of Bedr Basim, fell sick one day, whereupon his heart throbbed, and he felt that he was about to be removed to the mansion of eternity. Then his malady increased so that he was at the point of death.

He therefore summoned his son, and charged him to take care of his subjects and his mother and all the lords of his empire and all the dependants. He also made them swear, and covenanted with them, that they would obey his son, a second time; and he confided in their oaths. And after this, he remained a few days, and was admitted to the mercy of God, whose name he exalted! His son Bedr Basim, and his wife Jullanar, and the emirs and wezirs and the lords of the empire, mourned over him; and they made for him a tomb, and buried him in it, and continued the ceremonies of mourning for him a whole month. Salih, the brother of Jullanar, and her mother, and the daughters of her uncle, also came, and consoled them for the loss of the King; and they said, O Jullanar, if the King hath died, he hath left this ingenuous youth, and he who hath left such as he is hath not died. This is he who hath not an equal, the crushing lion, and the splendid moon.—Then the lords of the empire, and the grandees, went in to the King Bedr Basim, and said to him, O King, there is no harm in mourning for the King; but mourning becometh not any save women; therefore trouble not thy heart and ours by mourning for thy father, for he hath died and left thee, and he who hath left such as thou art hath not died. They proceeded to address him with soft words, and to console him, and after that they conducted him into the bath; and when he came forth from the bath, he put on a magnificent suit woven of gold, adorned with jewels and jacinths, and he put the royal crown upon his head, seated himself upon the throne of his kingdom, and performed the affairs of the people, deciding equitably between the strong and the weak, and exacting for the poor man his due from the emir; wherefore the people loved him exceedingly. Thus he continued to do so for the space of a whole year; and after every short period, his family of the sea visited him; so his life was pleasant, and his eye was cheerful; and he ceased not to live in this state for a length of time.

A JAPANESE TALE

This famous story relates the most celebrated episode in the annals of modern Japan. The actual deed was done in the year 1703, and within a few months became the basis of a popular play. Before the middle of the century over fifty plays and operas and a host of tales and poems had been written round it. Practically nothing is known of the authorship of these stories, which in themselves form a considerable literature.

THE FORTY-SEVEN RONINS

AT THE beginning of the Eighteenth Century there lived a daimio, called Asano Takumi no Kami, the Lord of the Castle of Ako, in the province of Harima. Now it happened that an Imperial ambassador from the Court of the Mikado, having been sent to the Shogun at Yedo, Takumi no Kami and another noble called Kamei Sama, were appointed to receive and feast the envoy; and a high official, named Kira Kōtsuké no Suké, was named to teach them the proper ceremonies to be observed upon the occasion. The two nobles were accordingly forced to go daily to the castle to listen to the instructions of Kōtsuké no Suké. But this Kōtsuké no Suké was a man greedy of money, and as he deemed that the presents which the two daimios, according to time-honored custom, had brought him in return for his instruction, were mean and unworthy, he conceived a great hatred against them, and took no pains in teaching them, but on the contrary rather sought to make laughing-stocks of them. Takumi no Kami, restrained by a stern sense of duty, bore his insults with patience, but Kamei Sama, who had less control over his temper, was violently incensed and determined to kill Kōtsuké no Suké.

One night when his duties at the castle were ended, Kamei Sama returned to his own palace, and having summoned his councilors to a secret conference, said to them: "Kōtsuké no Suké has insulted Takumi no Kami and myself during our service in attendance on the Imperial envoy. This is against all decency, and I was minded to kill him on the spot; but I bethought me that if I did such a deed within the precincts of the castle, not only would my own life be forfeit, but my family and vassals would be ruined: so I stayed my hand. Still the life of such a

wretch is a sorrow to the people, and to-morrow when I go to Court I will slay him: my mind is made up, and I will listen to no remonstrance." And as he spoke his face became livid with rage.

Now one of Kamei Sama's councilors was a man of great judgment, and when he saw from his lord's manner that remonstrance would be useless, he said: "Your lordship's words are law; your servant will make all preparations accordingly; and to-morrow, when your lordship goes to Court, if this Kôtsuké no Suké should again be insolent, let him die the death." And his lord was pleased at this speech, and waited with impatience for the day to break, that he might return to Court and kill his enemy.

But the councilor went home, and was much troubled, and thought anxiously about what his prince had said. And as he reflected, it occurred to him that since Kôtsuké no Suké had the reputation of being a miser he would certainly be open to a bribe, and that it was better to pay any sum, no matter how great, than that this lord and his house should be ruined. So he collected all the money he could, and, giving it to his servants to carry, rode off in the night to Kôtsuké no Suké's palace, and said to his retainers: "My master, who is now in attendance upon the Imperial envoy, owes much thanks to my Lord Kôtsuké no Suké, who has been at so great pains to teach him the proper ceremonies to be observed during the reception of the Imperial envoy. This is but a shabby present which he has sent by me, but he hopes that his lordship will condescend to accept it, and commends himself to his lordship's favor." And, with these words, he produced a thousand ounces of silver for Kôtsuké no Suké, and a hundred ounces to be distributed among his retainers.

When the latter saw the money their eyes sparkled with pleasure, and they were profuse in their thanks; and, begging the councilor to wait a little, they went and told their master of the lordly present which had arrived with a polite message from Kamei Sana. Kôtsuké Suké in eager delight sent for the councilor into an inner chamber, and after thanking him, promised on the morrow to instruct his master carefully in all the different points of etiquette. So the councilor seeing the miser's glee rejoiced at the success of his plan; and having taken his leave he returned home in high spirits. But Kamei Sama, little thinking how his vassal had propitiated his enemy, lay brooding over his vengeance, and on the following morning at daybreak went to Court

in solemn procession.

When Kôtsuké no Suké met him his manner had completely changed, and nothing could exceed his courtesy. "You have come early to Court this morning, my Lord Kamei," said he. "I cannot sufficiently admire your zeal. I shall have the honor to call your attention to several points of etiquette to-day. I must beg your lordship to excuse my previous conduct, which must have seemed very rude; but I am naturally of a cross-grained disposition, so I pray you to forgive me." And as he kept on humbling himself and making fair speeches, the heart of Kamei Sama was gradually softened, and he renounced his intention of killing him. Thus, by the cleverness of his councilor, was Kamei Sama, with all his house, saved from ruin.

Shortly after this Takumi no Kami, who had sent no present, arrived at the castle, and Kôtsuké no Suké turned him into ridicule even more than before, provoking him wit' sneers and covered insults; but Takumi no Kami affected to ignore all this, and submitted himself patiently to Kôtsuké no Suké's orders.

This conduct, so far from producing a good effect, only made Kôtsuké no Suké despise him the more, until at last he said haughtily: "Here, my Lord of Takumi, the ribbon of my sock has come untied; be so good as to tie it up for me."

Takumi no Kami, although burning with rage at the affront, still thought that as he was on duty he was bound to obey, and tied up the ribbon of the sock. Then Kôtsuké no Suké, turning from him, petulantly exclaimed: "Why, how clumsy you are! You cannot so much as tie up the ribbon of a sock properly! Anyone can see that you are a boor from the country, and know nothing of the manners of Yedo." And with a scornful laugh he moved towards an inner room.

But the patience of Takumi no Kami was exhausted; this last insult was more than he could bear.

"Stop a moment, my lord," cried he.

"Well, what is it?" replied the other. And, as he turned round, Takumi no Kami drew his dirk, and aimed a blow at his head; but Kôtsuké no Suké, being protected by the Court cap which he wore, the wound was but a scratch, so he ran away; and Takumi no Kami, pursuing him, tried a second time to cut him down, but missing his aim, struck his dirk into a pillar. At this moment an officer, named Kajikawa Yosobei, seeing the affray, rushed up,

and holding back the infuriated noble, gave Kôtsuké no Suké time to make good his escape.

Then there arose a great uproar and confusion, and Takumi no Kami was arrested and disarmed, and confined in one of the apartments of the palace under the care of the censors. A council was held, and the prisoner was given over to the safeguard of a daimio, called Tamura Ukiyô no Daibu, who kept him in close custody in his own house, to the great grief of his wife and of his retainers; and when the deliberations of the council were completed, it was decided that, as he had committed an outrage and attacked another man within the precincts of the palace, he must perform *hara kiri*, that is, commit suicide by disemboweling; his goods must be confiscated, and his family ruined. Such was the law. So Takumi no Kami performed *hara kiri*, his castle of Akô was confiscated, and his retainers, having become Rônins, some of them took service with other daimios, and others became merchants.

Now amongst these retainers was his principal councilor, a man called Oishi Kuranosuké, who with forty-six other faithful dependents formed a league to avenge their master's death by killing Kôtsuké no Suké. This Oishi Kuranosuké was absent at the castle of Akô at the time of the affray, which, had he been with his prince, would never have occurred; for, being a wise man, he would not have failed to propitiate Kôtsuké no Suké by sending him suitable presents; while the councilor who was in attendance on the prince at Yedo was a dullard, who neglected this precaution, and so caused the death of his master and the ruin of his house.

So Oishi Kuranosuké and his forty-six companions began to lay their plans of vengeance against Kôtsuké no Suké; but the latter was so well guarded by a body of men lent to him by a daimio called Uyésugi Sama, whose daughter he had married, that they saw that the only way of attaining their end would be to throw their enemy off his guard. With this object they separated, and disguised themselves, some as carpenters or craftsmen, others as merchants; and their chief, Kuranosuké, went to Kiôto, and built a house in the quarter called Yamashina, where he took to frequenting houses of the worst repute, and gave himself up to drunkenness and debauchery, as if nothing were further from his mind than revenge. Kôtsuké no Suké, in the meanwhile, sus-

pecting that Takumi no Kami's former retainers would be scheming against his life, secretly sent spies to Kiôto, and caused a faithful account to be kept of all that Kuranosuké did. The latter, however, determined thoroughly to delude the enemy into a false security, went on leading a dissolute life with harlots and wine-bibbers. One day, as he was returning home drunk from some low haunt, he fell down in the street and went to sleep, and all the passers-by laughed him to scorn. It happened that a Satsuma man saw this, and said: "Is not this Oishi Kuranosuké, who was a councilor of Asano Takumi no Kami, and who, not having the heart to avenge his lord, gives himself up to women and wine? See how he lies drunk in the public street! Faithless beast! Fool and craven! Unworthy the name of a Samurai!"

And he trod on Kuranosuké's face as he slept, and spat upon him; but when Kôtsuké no Suké's spies reported all this at Yedo he was greatly relieved at the news, and felt secure from danger.

One day Kuranosuké's wife, who was bitterly grieved to see her husband lead this abandoned life, went to him and said: "My lord, you told me at first that your debauchery was but a trick to make your enemy relax in watchfulness. But indeed, indeed, this has gone too far. I pray and beseech you to put some restraint upon yourself."

"Trouble me not," replied Kuranosuké, "for I will not listen to your whining. Since my way of life is displeasing to you, I will divorce you, and you may go about your business; and I will buy some pretty young girl from one of the public-houses, and marry her for my pleasure. I am sick of the sight of an old woman like you about the house, so get you gone—the sooner the better."

So saying, he flew into a violent rage, and his wife, terror-stricken, pleaded piteously for mercy.

"Oh, my lord! unsay those terrible words! I have been your faithful wife for twenty years, and have borne you three children; in sickness and in sorrow I have been with you; you cannot be so cruel as to turn me out of doors now. Have pity! have pity!"

"Cease this useless wailing. My mind is made up, and you must go; and as the children are in my way also, you are welcome to take them with you."

When she heard her husband speak thus, in her grief she sought her eldest son, Oishi Chikara, and begged him to plead

for her, and pray that she might be pardoned. But nothing would turn Kuranosuké from his purpose; so his wife was sent away, with the two younger children, and went back to her native place. But Oishi Chikara remained with his father.

The spies communicated all this without fail to Kôtsuké no Suké, and he, when he heard how Kuranosuké having turned his wife and children out of doors and bought a concubine, was groveling in a life of drunkenness and lust, began to think that he had no longer anything to fear from the retainers of Takumi no Kami, who must be cowards, without the courage to avenge their lord. So by degrees he began to keep a less strict watch, and sent back half of the guard which had been lent to him by his father-in-law, Uyésugi Sama. Little did he think how he was falling into the trap laid for him by Kuranosuké, who, in his zeal to slay his lord's enemy, thought nothing of divorcing his wife and sending away his children! Admirable and faithful man!

In this way Kuranosuké continued to throw dust in the eyes of his foe, by persisting in his apparently shameless conduct; but his associates all went to Yedo, and, having in their several capacities as workmen and peddlers contrived to gain access to Kôtsuké no Suké's house, made themselves familiar with the plan of the building and the arrangement of the different rooms, and ascertained the character of the inmates, who were brave and loyal men, and who were cowards; upon all of which matters they sent regular reports to Kuranosuké. And when at last it became evident from the letters which arrived from Yedo that Kôtsuké no Suké was thoroughly off his guard, Kuranosuké rejoiced that the day of vengeance was at hand; and, having appointed a trysting-place at Yedo, he fled secretly from Kiôto, eluding the vigilance of his enemy's spies. Then the forty-seven men, having laid all their plans, bided their time patiently.

It was now midwinter, the twelfth month of the year, and the cold was bitter. One night, during a heavy fall of snow, when the whole world was hushed, and peaceful men were stretched in sleep upon the mats, the Rônins determined that no more favorable opportunity could occur for carrying out their purpose. So they took counsel together, and having divided their band into two parties, assigned to each man his post. One band, led by Oishi Kuranosuké, was to attack the front gate, and the other,

under his son Oishi Chikara, was to attack the rear of Kôtsuké no Suke's house; but as Chikara was only sixteen years of age, Yoshida Chiuzayémon was appointed to act as his guardian. Further it was arranged that a drum, beaten at the order of Kuranosuké, should be the signal for the simultaneous attack; and that if any one slew Kôtsuké no Suké and cut off his head he should blow a shrill whistle, as a signal to his comrades, who would hurry to the spot, and, having identified the head, carry it off to the temple called Sengakuji, and lay it as an offering before the tomb of their dead lord. Then they must report their deed to the Government, and await their sentence. To this the Rônins one and all pledged themselves. Midnight was fixed upon as the hour, and the forty-seven comrades, having made all ready for the attack, partook of a last farewell feast together, for on the morrow they must die. Then Oishi Kuranosuké addressed the band, and said:

"To-night we shall attack our enemy in his palace; his retainers will certainly resist us, and we shall be obliged to kill them. But to slay old men and women and children is a pitiful thing; therefore, I pray you each one to take a great heed lest you kill a single helpless person." His comrades all applauded this speech, and so they remained, waiting for the hour of midnight to arrive.

When the appointed hour came, the Rônins set forth. The wind howled furiously, and the driving snow beat in their faces; but little cared they for wind or snow as they hurried on their road. At last they reached Kôtsuké no Suke's house, and divided themselves into two bands; and Chikara, with twenty-three men, went round to the back gate. Then four men, by means of a ladder of ropes which they hung on to the roof of the porch, effected an entry into the courtyard; and, as they saw signs that all inmates of the house were asleep, they went into the porter's lodge where the guard slept, and, before the latter had time to recover from their astonishment, bound them. The terrified guard prayed hard for mercy, that their lives might be spared; and to this the Rônins agreed on condition that the keys of the gate should be given up; but the others tremblingly said that the keys were kept in the house of one of their officers, and that they had no means of obtaining them. Then the Rônins lost patience, and with a hammer smashed to shivers the big wooden bolt which secured the gate, and the doors flew open to the right and to the

left. At the same time Chikara and his party broke in by the back gate.

Then Oishi Kuranosuké sent a messenger to the neighboring houses, bearing the following message: "We, the Rônins who were formerly in the service of Asano Takumi no Kami, are this night about to break into the palace of Kôtsuké no Suké, to avenge our lord. As we are neither night robbers nor ruffians, no hurt will be done to the neighboring houses. We pray you to set your minds at rest." And as Kôtsuké no Suké was hated by his neighbors for his covetousness, they did not unite their forces to assist him. Another precaution was yet taken. Lest any of the people inside should run out to call the relations of the family to the rescue, and these coming in force should interfere with the plans of the Rônins, Kuranosuké stationed ten of his men armed with bows on the roof of the four sides of the courtyard, with orders to shoot any retainers who might attempt to leave the place. Having thus laid all his plans and posted his men, Kuranosuké with his own hand beat the drum and gave the signal for attack.

Ten of Kôtsuké no Suké's retainers, hearing the noise, woke up; and, drawing their swords, rushed into the front room to defend their master. At this moment the Rônins, who had burst open the door of the front hall, entered the same room. Then arose a furious fight between the two parties, in the midst of which Chikara, leading his men through the garden, broke into the back of the house; and Kôtsuké no Suké, in terror of his life, took refuge, with his wife and female servants, in a closet in the veranda; while the rest of his retainers, who slept in the barrack outside the house, made ready to go to the rescue. But the Rônins who had come in by the front door, and were fighting with the ten retainers, ended by overpowering and slaying the latter without losing one of their own number; after which, forcing their way bravely towards the back rooms, they were joined by Chikara and his men, and the two bands were united in one.

By this time the remainder of Kôtsuké no Suké's men had come in, and the fight became general; and Kuranosuké, sitting on a camp-stool, gave his orders and directed the Rônins. Soon the inmates of the house perceived that they were no match for their enemy, so they tried to send out intelligence of their plight to Uyésugi Sama, their lord's father-in-law, begging him to come to

the rescue with all the force at his command. But the messengers were shot down by the archers whom Kuranosuké had posted on the roof. So no help coming, they fought on in despair. Then Kuranosuké cried out with a loud voice: "Kôtsuké no Suké alone is our enemy; let someone go inside and bring him forth dead or alive!"

Now in front of Kôtsuké no Suké's private room stood three brave retainers with drawn swords. The first was Kobayashi Héhachi, the second was Waku Handaiyu, and the third was Shimidzu Ikkaku, all good men and true, and expert swordsmen. So stoutly did these men lay about them that for awhile they kept the whole of the Rônins at bay, and at one moment even forced them back. When Oishi Kuranosuké saw this, he ground his teeth with rage, and shouted to his men: "What! did not every man of you swear to lay down his life in avenging his lord, and now are you beaten back by three men? Cowards, not fit to be spoken to! To die fighting in a master's cause should be the noblest ambition of a retainer!" Then turning to his own son Chikara, he said, "Here, boy! engage those men, and if they are too strong for you, die!"

Spurred by these words, Chikara seized a spear and gave battle to Waku Handaiyu, but could not hold his ground, and backing by degrees, was driven out into the garden, where he missed his footing and slipped into a pond; but as Handaiyu, thinking to kill him, looked down into the pond, Chikara cut his enemy in the leg and caused him to fall, and then crawling out of the water despatched him. In the meanwhile, Kobayashi Héhachi and Shimidzu Ikkaku had been killed by the other Rônins, and of all Kôtsuké no Suké's retainers not one fighting man remained. Chikara, seeing this, went with his bloody sword in his hand into a back room to search for Kôtsuké no Suké, but he only found the son of the latter, a young lord named Kira Sahiroyé, who, carrying a halberd, attacked him, but was soon wounded and fled. Thus the whole of Kôtsuké no Suké's men having been killed, there was an end of the fighting; but as yet there was no trace of Kôtsuké no Suké to be found.

Then Kuranosuké divided his men into several parties and searched the whole house, but all in vain; women and children weeping were alone to be seen. At this the forty-seven men began to lose heart in regret, that after all their toil they had allowed

their enemy to escape them, and there was a moment when in their despair they agreed to commit suicide together upon the spot; but they determined to make one more effort. So Kuranosuké went into Kôtsuké no Suké's sleeping-room, and touching the quilt with his hands, exclaimed, "I have just felt the bed-clothes and they are yet warm, and so methinks that our enemy is not far off. He must certainly be hidden somewhere in the house." Greatly excited by this, the Rônins renewed their search. Now in the raised part of the room, near the place of honor, there was a picture hanging; taking down this picture, they saw that there was a large hole in the plastered wall, and on thrusting a spear in they could feel nothing beyond it. So one of the Rônins, called Yazama Jiutarô, got into the hole, and found that on the other side there was a little courtyard, in which there stood an outhouse for holding charcoal and firewood. Looking into the outhouse, he spied something white at the further end, at which he struck with his spear, when two armed men sprang out upon him and tried to cut him down, but he kept them back until one of his comrades came up and killed one of the two men and engaged the other, while Jiutarô entered the outhouse and felt about with his spear. Again seeing something white, he struck it with his lance, when a cry of pain betrayed that it was a man; so he rushed up, and the man in white clothes, who had been wounded in the thigh, drew a dirk and aimed a blow at him. But Jiutarô wrested the dirk from him, and clutching him by the collar, dragged him out of the outhouse. Then the other Rônin came up, and they examined the prisoner attentively, and saw that he was a noble-looking man, some sixty years of age, dressed in a white satin sleeping-robe, which was stained by the blood from the thigh-wound which Jiutarô had inflicted. The two men felt convinced that this was no other than Kôtsuké no Suké, and they asked him his name, but he gave no answer, so they gave the signal whistle, and all their comrades collected together at the call; then Oishi Kuranosuké, bringing a lantern, scanned the old man's features, and it was indeed Kôtsuké no Suké; and if further proof were wanting, he still bore a scar on his forehead where their master, Asano Takumi no Kami, had wounded him during the affray in the castle. There being no possibility of mistake, therefore Oishi Kuranosuké went down on his knees, and addressing the old

man very respectfully, said:

"My lord, we are the retainers of Asano Takumi no Kami. Last year your lordship and our master quarreled in the palace, and our master was sentenced to *hara kiri*, and his family was ruined. We have come tonight to avenge him, as is the duty of faithful and loyal men. I pray your lordship to acknowledge the justice of our purpose. And now, my lord, we beseech you to perform *hara kiri*. I myself shall have the honor to act as your second, and when, with all humility, I shall have received your lordship's head, it is my intention to lay it as an offering upon the grave of Asano Takumi no Kami."

Thus, in consideration of the high rank of Kôtsuké no Suké, the Rônins treated him with the greatest courtesy, and over and over again entreated him to perform *hara kiri*. But he crouched speechless and trembling. At last Kuranosuké, seeing that it was vain to urge him to die the death of a nobleman, forced him down, and cut off his head with the same dirk with which Asano Takumi no Kami had killed himself. Then the forty-seven comrades, elated at having accomplished their design, placed the head in a bucket, and prepared to depart; but before leaving the house they carefully extinguished all the lights and fires in the place, lest by any accident a fire should break out and the neighbors suffer.

As they were on their way to Takanawa, the suburb in which the temple called Sengakuji stands, the day broke; and the people flocked out to see the forty-seven men, who, with their clothes and arms all blood-stained, presented a terrible appearance; and everyone praised them, wondering at their valor and faithfulness. But they expected every moment that Kotsuké no Suké's father-in-law would attack them and carry off their head, so they determined to die nobly sword in hand. However, they reached Takanawa in safety, for Matsudaira Aki no Kami, one of the eighteen chief daimios of Japan of whose house Asano Takumi no Kami had been a cadet, had been highly pleased when he heard of the last night's work, and he had made ready to assist the Rônins in case they were attacked. So Kôtsuké no Suké's father-in-law dared not pursue them.

At about seven in the morning they came opposite to the palace of Matsudaira Mutsu no Kami, the Prince of Sendai, and the prince hearing of it, sent for one of his councilors and said:

"The retainers of Takumi no Kami have slain their lord's enemy, The inconvenience which he suffered in consequence of having and are passing this way; I am filled with admiration at their devotion, so, as they must be tired and hungry after their night's work, do you go and invite them to come in here, and set some gruel and a cup of wine before them."

So the councilor went out and said to Oishi Kuranosuké, "Sir, I am a councilor of the Prince of Sendai, and my master bids me beg you, as you must be worn out after all you have undergone, to come in and partake of such poor refreshment as we can offer you. This is my message to you from my lord."

"I thank you, sir," replied Kuranosuké. "It is very good of his lordship to trouble himself to think of us. We shall accept his kindness gratefully."

So the forty-seven Rônins went into the palace, and were feasted with gruel and wine, and all the retainers of the Prince of Sendai came and praised them.

Then Kuranosuké turned to the councilor and said, "Sir, we are truly indebted to you for this kind hospitality; but as we have still to hurry to Sengakuji, we must needs humbly take our leave." And, after returning many thanks to their hosts, they left the palace of the Prince of Sendai and hastened to Sengakuji, where they were met by the abbot of the monastery, who went to the front gate to receive them, and led them to the tomb of Takumi no Kami.

And when they came to their lord's grave they took the head of Kôtsuké no Suké, and, having washed it clean in a well hard by, laid it as an offering before the tomb. When they had done this, they engaged the priests of the temple to come and read prayers while they burnt incense; first Oishi Kuranosuké burnt incense, and then his son Oishi Chikara, and after them the other forty-five men performed the same ceremony. Then Kuranosuké, having given all the money that he had by him to the abbot, said:

"When we forty-seven men shall have performed *hara kiri*, I beg you to bury us decently. I rely upon your kindness. This is but a trifle that I have to offer; such as it is, let it be spent in masses for our souls."

And the abbot, marveling at the faithful courage of the men, with tears in his eyes pledged himself to fulfil their wishes. So

the forty-seven Rônins, with their minds at rest, waited patiently until they should receive the orders of the Government.

At last they were summoned to the Supreme Court, where the governors of Yedo and the public censors had assembled; and the sentence passed upon them was as follows: "Whereas, neither respecting the dignity of the city nor fearing the Government, having leagued yourselves together to slay your enemy, you violently broke into the house of Kira Kôtsuké no Suké by night and murdered him, the sentence of the Court is, that, for this audacious conduct, you perform *hara kiri*." When the sentence had been read, the forty-seven Rônins were divided into four parties, and handed over to the safe keeping of four different daimios; and sheriffs were sent to the palaces of those daimios in whose presence the Rônins were made to perform *hara kiri*. But, as from the very beginning they had all made up their minds that to this end they must come, they met their death nobly; and their corpses were carried to Sengakuji, and buried in front of the tomb of their master, Asano Takumi no Kami. And when the fame of this became noised abroad, the people flocked to pray at the graves of these faithful men.

Among those who came to pray was a Satsuma man, who, prostrating himself before the grave of Oishi Kuranosuké, said: "When I saw you lying drunk by the roadside at Yamashina, in Kiôto, I knew not that you were plotting to avenge your lord; and, thinking you to be a faithless man, I trampled on you and spat in your face as I passed. And now I have come to ask pardon and offer atonement for the insult of last year." With these words he prostrated himself again before the grave and, drawing a dirk from his girdle, performed *hara kiri* and died. And the chief priest of the temple, taking pity upon him, buried him by the side of the Rônins; and his tomb still remains to be seen with those of the forty-seven comrades.

This is the end of the story of the Forty-seven Rônins.

HANS CHRISTIAN ANDERSEN 1805-1875

A Dane by birth. His first ambitions were theatrical, but, when friends of his supplied him with the means, attended the university at Copenhagen instead. Published a volume of travels in 1828. The first of his "Tales," on which his fame rests, were published in 1836. Wrote also poems, sketches, plays, and an autobiography published after his death.

SOMETHING

"I WANT to be something!" said the eldest of five brothers.

"I want to do something in the world, I don't care how humble my position may be in society, if I only effect some good, for that will really be something. I'll make bricks, for they are quite indispensable things, and then I shall truly have done something."

"But that something will not be enough!" quoth the second brother. "What you intend doing is just as much as nothing at all. It is journeyman's work, and can be done by a machine. No. I would rather be a bricklayer at once, for that is something real; and that's what I will be. That brings rank: as a bricklayer one belongs to a guild, and is a citizen, and has one's own flag and one's own house of call. Yes, and if all goes well, I will keep journeymen. I shall become a master bricklayer, and my wife will be a master's wife—that is what I call something."

"That's nothing at all!" said the third. "That is beyond the pale of the guild, and there are many of those in a town that stand far above the mere master artisan. You may be an honest man; but as 'master' you will after all only belong to those who are ranked among common men. I know something better than that. I will be an architect, and will thus enter into the territory of art and speculation. I shall be reckoned among those who stand high in point of intellect. I shall certainly have to serve up from the pickaxe, so to speak; so I must begin as a carpenter's apprentice, and must go about as an assistant, in a cap, though I am accustomed to wear a silk hat. I shall have to fetch beer and spirits for the common journeymen, and they will call me 'thou,' and that is insulting! But I shall imagine to myself that

the whole thing is only acting, and a kind of masquerade. Tomorrow—that is to say, when I have served my time—I shall go my own way, and the others will be nothing to me. I shall go to the academy, and get instructions in drawing, and shall be called an architect. That's something! I may get to be called ‘sir,’ and even ‘worshipful sir’ or even get a handle at the front or at the back of my name, and shall go on building and building, just as those before me have built. That will always be a thing to remember, and that's what I call something!”

“But I don't care at all for that something,” said the fourth. “I won't sail in the wake of others, and be a copyist. I will be a genius and will stand up greater than all the rest of you together. I shall be the creator of a new style, and will give the plan of a building suitable to the climate and the material of the country, for the nationality of the people, for the development of the age—and an additional story for my own genius.”

“But supposing the climate and the material are bad,” said the fifth, “that would be a disastrous circumstance, for these two exert a great influence! Nationality, moreover, may expand itself until it becomes affectation, and the development of the century may run wild with your work, as youth often runs wild. I quite realize the fact that none of you will be anything real, however much you may believe in yourselves. But, do what you like, I will not resemble you: I shall keep on the outside of things, and criticize whatever you produce. To every work there is attached something that is not right—something that has gone wrong; and I will ferret that out and find fault with it; and that will be doing something!”

And he kept his word: and everybody said concerning this fifth brother, “There is certainly something in him; he has a good head, but he does nothing.” And by that very means they thought something of him!

Now, you see, this is only a little story; but will never end so long as the world lasts.

But what became of the five brothers? Why, this is nothing, and not something.

Listen, it is a capital story.

The eldest brother, who manufactured bricks, soon became aware of the fact that every brick, however small it might be, produced for him a little coin, though this coin was only copper;

and many copper pennies laid one upon the other can be changed into a shining dollar; and wherever one knocks with such a dollar in one's hand, whether at the baker's, or the butcher's, or the tailor's—wherever it may be, the door flies open, and the visitor is welcomed, and gets what he wants. You see that is what comes of bricks. Some of those belonging to the eldest brother certainly crumbled away, or broke in two, but there was a use even for these.

On the high rampart, the wall that kept out the sea, Margaret, the poor woman, wished to build herself a little house. All the faulty bricks were given to her, and a few perfect ones into the bargain, for the eldest brother was a good-natured man, though he certainly did not achieve anything beyond the manufacture of bricks. The poor woman put together the house for herself. It was little and narrow and the single window was quite crooked. The door was too low, and the thatched roof might have shown better workmanship. But after all it was a shelter; and from the little house you could look far across the sea, whose waves broke vainly against the protecting rampart on which it was built. The salt billows spat their spray over the whole house, which was still standing when he who had given the bricks for its erection had long been dead and buried.

The second brother knew better how to build a wall, for he had served an apprenticeship to it. When he had served his time and passed his examination, he packed his knapsack and sang the journeyman's song:

"While I am young I'll wander, from place to place I'll roam,
And everywhere build houses, until I come back home;
And youth will give me courage, and my true love won't forget:
Hurrah, then, for a workman's life! I'll be a master yet!"

And he carried his idea into effect. When he had come home and become a master, he built one house after another in the town. He built a whole street; and when the street was finished and became an ornament to the place, the houses built a house for him in return, that was to be his own. But how can houses build a house? If you ask them they will not answer you, but people will understand what is meant by the expression, and say, "Certainly, it was the street that built his house for him." It was little, and the floor was covered with clay; but when he danced with his bride upon this clay floor, it seemed to become polished

oak; and from every stone in the wall sprang forth a flower, and the room was gay, as if with the costliest paper-hanger's work. It was a pretty house, and in it lived a happy pair. The flag of the guild fluttered before the house, and the journeymen and apprentices shouted hurrah! Yes, he certainly was something! And at last he died; and that was something too.

Now came the architect, the third brother, who had been at first a carpenter's apprentice, had worn a cap, and served as an errand boy, but had afterwards gone to the academy, and risen to become an architect, and to be called "honoured sir." Yes, if the houses of the street had built a house for the brother who had become a bricklayer, the street now received its name from the architect, and the handsomest house in it became his property. *That* was something, and *he* was something; and he had a long title before and after his name. His children were called genteel children, and when he died his widow was "a widow of rank," and that is something!—and his name always remained at the corner of the street, and lived on in the mouth of every one as the street's name—and that was something!

Now came the genius of the family, the fourth brother, who wanted to invent something new and original, and an additional story on the top of it for himself. But the top story tumbled down, and he came tumbling down with it, and broke his neck. Nevertheless he had a splendid funeral, with guild flags and music, poems in the papers, and flowers strewn on the paving-stones in the street; and three funeral orations were held over him, each one longer than the last, which would have rejoiced him greatly, for he always liked it when people talked about him; a monument also was erected over his grave. It was only one story high, but still it was something.

Now he was dead, like the three other brothers; but the last one who was a critic, outlived them all: and that was quite right, for by this means he got the last word, and it was of great importance to him to have the last word. The people always said he had a good head of his own. At last his hour came, and he died, and came to the gates of Paradise. There souls always enter two and two, and he came up with another soul that wanted to get into Paradise too; and who should this be but old Dame Margaret from the house upon the sea wall.

"I suppose this is done for the sake of contrast, that I and this

wretched soul should arrive here at exactly the same time," said the critic. "Pray, who are you, my good woman?" he asked. "Do you want to get in here too?"

And the old woman curtsied as well as she could: she thought it must be St. Peter himself talking to her.

"I'm a poor old woman of a very humble family," she replied. "I'm old Margaret that lived in the house on the sea wall."

"Well, and what have you done? What have you accomplished down there?"

"I have really accomplished nothing at all in the world: nothing that I can plead to have the doors here opened to me. It would be a real mercy to allow me to slip in through the gate."

"In what manner did you leave the world?" asked he, just for the sake of saying something; for it was wearisome work standing there and saying nothing.

"Why, I really don't know how I left it. I was sick and miserable during my last years, and could not well bear creeping out of bed, and going out suddenly into the frost and cold. It was a hard winter, but I have got out of it all now. For a few days the weather was quite calm, but very cold, as your honour must very well know. The sea was covered with ice as far as one could look. All the people from the town walked out upon the ice, and I think they said there was a dance there, and skating. There was beautiful music and a great feast there too; the sound came into my poor little room, where I lay ill. And it was towards the evening; the moon had risen beautifully, but was not yet in its full splendour; I looked from my bed out over the wide sea, and far off, just where the sea and sky join, a strange white cloud came up. I lay looking at the cloud, and I saw a little black spot in the middle of it, that grew larger and larger; and now I knew what it meant, for I am old and experienced, though this token is not often seen. I knew it, and a shuddering came upon me. Twice in my life I have seen the same thing; and I knew there would be an awful tempest and a spring flood, which would overwhelm the poor people who were now drinking and dancing and rejoicing—young and old, the whole city had issued forth: who was to warn them, if no one saw what was coming yonder, or knew, as I did, what it meant? I was dreadfully alarmed and felt more lively than I had done for a long time. I crept out of bed, and got to the window, but could not crawl farther, I was so exhausted. But I

managed to open the window. I saw the people outside running and jumping about on the ice; I could see the beautiful flags that waved in the wind. I heard the boys shouting 'hurrah!' and the servant men and maids singing. There were all kinds of merriment going on. But the white cloud with the black spot! I was too far from the people. Soon the storm would burst, and the ice would break, and all who were upon it would be lost without remedy. They could not hear me, and I could not come out to them. Oh, if I could only bring them ashore! Then kind Heaven inspired me with the thought of setting fire to my bed, and rather to let the house burn down, than that all those people should perish so miserably. I succeeded in lighting up a beacon for them. The red flame blazed up on high, and I escaped out of the door, but fell down exhausted on the threshold, and could get no farther. The flames rushed on towards me, flickered through the window, and rose high above the roof. All the people on the ice yonder beheld it, and ran as fast as they could, to give aid to the poor old woman who, they thought, was being burned to death. Not one remained behind. I heard them coming; but I also became aware of a rushing sound in the air; I heard a rumbling like the sound of heavy artillery; the spring flood was lifting the covering of ice, which presently cracked and burst into a thousand fragments. But the people succeeded in reaching the sea wall—I saved them all! But I fancy I could not bear the cold and the fright, and so I came up here to the gates of Paradise. I am told they are opened to poor creatures like me—and now I have no house left down upon the rampart: not that I think this will give me admission here."

Then the gates of heaven were opened, and the angel led the old woman in. She left a straw behind her, a straw that had been in her bed when she set it on fire to save the lives of many; and this straw had been changed into the purest gold—into gold that grew and grew, and spread out into beauteous leaves and flowers.

"Look, this is what the poor woman brought," said the angel to the critic. "What dost thou bring? I know that thou hast accomplished nothing—thou hast not made so much as a single brick. Ah, if thou couldst only return and effect at least as much as that! Probably the brick, when thou hadst made it, would not be worth much; but if it were made with a good will, it would at least be something. But thou canst not go back, and I can do

nothing for thee!"

Then the poor soul, the old dame who had lived on the dyke, put in a petition for him. She said,

"His brother gave me the bricks and the pieces out of which I built up my house, and that was a great deal for a poor woman like me. Could not all those bricks and pieces be counted as a single brick in his favor? It was an act of mercy. He wants it now; and is not this the very fountain of mercy?"

Then the angel said,

"Thy brother, him whom thou hast regarded as the least among you all, he whose honest industry seemed to thee as the most humble, hath given thee this heavenly gift. Thou shalt not be turned away. It shall be vouchsafed to thee to stand here without the gate, and to reflect, and repent of thy life down yonder; but thou shalt not be admitted until thou hast in earnest accomplished something."

"I could have said that in better words!" thought the critic, but he did not find fault aloud; and for him, after all, that was "SOMETHING!"

DESIDERIUS ERASMUS

1467-1536

A Dutch scholar, born at Rotterdam. The unhappy love-story of his parents forms, with some modifications, the plot of Reade's great novel, "The Cloister and the Hearth." At seventeen Erasmus was persuaded to become a monk. In 1492 he went to Paris to complete his studies, and there met an Englishman, Lord Mountjoy, who pensioned him for life. Shortly after the Pope released him from his vows. In 1497 he went to England where he met Sir Thomas More and wrote his "Praise of Folly." In 1510-1514 he lectured at Cambridge. He returned to the continent in 1514 to undertake his great work of editing the Greek Testament and thus pave the way for the Reformation. He died at Basle. The most famous of his writings are "Praise of Folly" and the "Colloquies."

A WRITTEN PORTRAIT OF MORE

Erasmus to Ulrich von Hutten

MOST illustrious Hutten, your love, I had almost said your passion for the genius of Thomas More,—kindled as it is by his writings, which, as you truly say, are as learned and witty as anything can possibly be,—is, I assure you, shared by many others; and moreover the feeling in this case is mutual; since More is so delighted with what you have written, that I am myself almost jealous of you. It is an example of what Plato says of that sweetest wisdom, which excites much more ardent love among men than the most admirable beauty of form. It is not discerned by the eye of sense, but the mind has eyes of its own, so that even here the Greek saying holds true, that out of Looking grows Liking; and so it comes to pass that people are sometimes united in the warmest affection, who have never seen or spoken to each other. And, as it is a common experience, that for some unexplained reason different people are attracted by different kinds of beauty, so between one mind and another, there seems to be a sort of latent kindred, which causes us to be specially delighted with some minds, and not with others.

As to your asking me to paint you a full-length portrait of More, I only wish my power of satisfying your request were equal to your earnestness in pressing it. For to me too, it will be no unpleasant task to linger awhile in the contemplation of

a friend, who is the most delightful character in the world. But, in the first place, it is not given to every man to be aware of all More's accomplishments; and in the next place, I know not whether he will himself like to have his portrait painted by any artist that chooses to do so. For indeed I do not think it more easy to make a likeness of More than of Alexander the Great, or of Achilles; neither were those heroes more worthy of immortality. The hand of an Apelles is required for such a subject, and I am afraid I am more like a Fulvius or a Rutuba than an Apelles. Nevertheless I will try to draw you a sketch, rather than a portrait, of the entire man, so far as daily and domestic intercourse has enabled me to observe his likeness and retain it in my memory. But if some diplomatic employment should ever bring you together, you will find out, how poor an artist you have chosen for this commission; and I am afraid you will think me guilty of envy or of wilful blindness in taking note of so few out of the many good points of his character.

To begin with that part of him which is least known to you—in shape and stature More is not a tall man, but not remarkably short, all his limbs being so symmetrical, that no deficiency is observed in this respect. His complexion is fair, his face being rather blonde than pale, but with no approach to redness, except a very delicate flush, which lights up the whole. His hair is auburn inclining to black, or if you like it better, black inclining to auburn; his beard thin, his eyes a bluish grey with some sort of tinting upon them. This kind of eye is thought to be a sign of the happiest character, and is regarded with favor in England, whereas with us black eyes are rather preferred. It is said, that no kind of eye is so free from defects of sight. His countenance answers to his character, having an expression of kind and friendly cheerfulness with a little air of raillery. To speak candidly, it is a face more expressive of pleasantry than of gravity or dignity, though very far removed from folly or buffoonery. His right shoulder seems a little higher than his left, especially when he is walking, a peculiarity that is not innate, but the result of habit, like many tricks of the kind. In the rest of his body there is nothing displeasing—only his hands are a little coarse, or appear so, as compared with the rest of his figure. He has always from his boyhood been very negligent of his toilet, so as not to give much attention even to the things,

which according to Ovid are all that men need care about. What a charm there was in his looks when young, may even now be inferred from what remains; although I knew him myself when he was not more than three and-twenty years old; for he has not yet passed much beyond his fortieth year. His health is sound rather than robust, but sufficient for any labors suitable to an honorable citizen; and we may fairly hope, that his life may be long, as he has a father living of a great age, but an age full of freshness and vigor.

I have never seen any person less fastidious in his choice of food. As a young man, he was by preference a water-drinker, a practice he derived from his father. But, not to give annoyance to others, he used at table to conceal this habit from his guests by drinking out of a pewter vessel, either small beer almost as weak as water, or plain water. As to wine, it being the custom, where he was, for the company to invite each other to drink in turn out of the same cup, he used sometimes to sip a little of it, to avoid appearing to shrink from it altogether, and to habituate himself to the common practice. For his eating he has been accustomed to prefer beef and salt meats, and household bread thoroughly fermented, to those articles of diet which are commonly regarded as delicacies. But he does not shrink from things that impart an innocent pleasure, even of a bodily kind, and has always a good appetite for milk-puddings and for fruit, and eats a dish of eggs with greatest relish.

His voice is neither loud nor excessively low, but of a penetrating tone. It has nothing in it melodious or soft, but is simply suitable for speech, as he does not seem to have any natural talent for singing, though he takes pleasure in music of every kind. His articulation is wonderfully distinct, being equally free from hurry and from hesitation.

He likes to be dressed simply, and does not wear silk, or purple, or gold chains, except when it is not allowable to dispense with them. He cares marvelously little for those formalities, which with ordinary people are the test of politeness; and as he does not exact these ceremonies from others, so he is not scrupulous in observing them himself, either on occasions of meeting or at entertainments, though he understands how to use them, if he thinks proper to do so; but he holds it to be effeminate and unworthy of a man to waste much of his time on such

trifles.

He was formerly rather disinclined to a Court life and to any intimacy with princes, having always a special hatred of tyranny and a great fancy for equality; whereas you will scarcely find any Court so well-ordered, as not to have much bustle and ambition and pretense and luxury, or to be free from tyranny in some form or other. He could not even be tempted to Henry the Eighth's Court without great trouble, although nothing could be desired more courteous or less exacting than this Prince. He is naturally fond of liberty and leisure; but as he enjoys a holiday when he has it, so whenever business requires it, no one is more vigilant or more patient.

He seems to be born and made for friendship, of which he is the sincerest and most persistent devotee. Neither is he afraid of that multiplicity of friends, of which Hesiod disapproves. Accessible to every tender of intimacy, he is by no means fastidious in choosing his acquaintance, while he is most accommodating in keeping it on foot, and constant in retaining it. If he has fallen in with anyone whose faults he cannot cure, he finds some opportunity of parting with him, untying the knot of intimacy without tearing it; but when he has found any sincere friends, whose characters are suited to his own, he is so delighted with their society and conversation, that he seems to find in these the chief pleasure of life, having an absolute distaste for tennis and dice and cards, and the other games with which the mass of gentlemen beguile the tediousness of Time. It should be added that, while he is somewhat neglectful of his own interest, no one takes more pains in attending to the concerns of his friends. What more need I say? If anyone requires a perfect example of true friendship, it is in More that he will best find it.

In company his extraordinary kindness and sweetness of temper are such as to cheer the dullest spirit, and alleviate the annoyance of the most trying circumstances. From boyhood he was always so pleased with a joke, that it might seem that jesting was the main object of his life; but with all that, he did not go so far as buffoonery, nor had ever any inclination to bitterness. When quite a youth, he wrote farces and acted them. If a thing was facetiously said, even though it was aimed at himself, he was charmed with it, so much did he enjoy any witticism that had a flavor of subtlety or genius. This led to his amusing himself

as a young man with epigrams, and taking great delight in Lucian. Indeed, it was he that suggested my writing the *Moria*, or Praise of Folly, which was much the same thing as setting a camel to dance.

There is nothing that occurs in human life, from which he does not seek to extract some pleasure, although the matter may be serious in itself. If he has to do with the learned and intelligent, he is delighted with their cleverness, if with unlearned or stupid people, he finds amusement in their folly. He is not offended even by professed clowns, as he adapts himself with marvelous dexterity to the tastes of all; while with ladies generally, and even with his wife, his conversation is made up of humor and playfulness. You would say it was a second Democritus, or rather that Pythagorean philosopher, who strolls in leisurely mood through the market-place, contemplating the turmoil of those who buy and sell. There is no one less guided by the opinion of the multitude, but on the other hand no one sticks more closely to common sense.

One of his amusements is in observing the forms, characters and instincts of different animals. Accordingly there is scarcely any kind of bird, that he does not keep about his residence, and the same of other animals not quite so common, as monkeys, foxes, ferrets, weasels and the like. Beside these, if he meets with any strange object, imported from abroad or otherwise remarkable, he is most eager to buy it, and has his house so well supplied with these objects, that there is something in every room which catches your eye, as you enter it; and his own pleasure is renewed every time that he sees others interested.

When of a sentimental age, he was not a stranger to the emotions of love, but without loss of character, having no inclination to press his advantage, and being more attracted by a mutual liking than by any licentious object.

He had drunk deep of Good Letters from his earliest years; and when a young man, he applied himself to the study of Greek and of philosophy; but his father was so far from encouraging him in this pursuit, that he withdrew his allowance and almost disowned him, because he thought he was deserting his hereditary study, being himself an expert professor of English law. For remote as that profession is from true learning, those who become masters of it have the highest rank and reputation among

their countrymen; and it is difficult to find any readier way to acquire fortune and honor. Indeed a considerable part of the nobility of that island has had its origin in this profession, in which it is said that no one can be perfect, unless he has toiled at it for many years. It was natural, that in his younger days our friend's genius, born for better things, should shrink from this study; nevertheless, after he had had a taste of the learning of the Schools, he became so conversant with it, that there was no one more eagerly consulted by suitors; and the income that he made by it was not surpassed by any of those who did nothing else; such was the power and quickness of his intellect.

He also expended considerable labor in perusing the volumes of the orthodox Fathers; and when scarcely more than a youth, he lectured publicly on the *De Civitate Dei* of Augustine before a numerous audience, old men and priests not being ashamed to take a lesson in divinity from a young layman, and not at all sorry to have done so. Meantime he applied his whole mind to religion, having some thought of taking orders, for which he prepared himself by watchings and fastings and prayers and such like exercises; wherein he showed much more wisdom than the generality of people, who rashly engage in so arduous a profession without testing themselves beforehand. And indeed there was no obstacle to his adopting this kind of life, except the fact, that he could not shake off his wish to marry. Accordingly he resolved to be a chaste husband rather than a licentious priest.

When he married, he chose a very young girl, a lady by birth, with her character still unformed, having been always kept in the country with her parents and sisters,—so that he was all the better able to fashion her according to his own habits. Under his direction she was instructed in learning and in every kind of Music, and had almost completely become just such a person as would have been a delightful companion for his whole life, if an early death had not carried her away. She had however borne him several children, of whom three girls, Margaret, Alice and Cecily, and one boy, John, are still living.

More did not however long remain single, but contrary to his friends' advice, a few months after his wife's death, he married a widow, more for the sake of the management of his household, than to please his own fancy, as she is no great beauty, nor yet young, *nec bella admodum nec puella*, as he sometimes laughingly

says, but a sharp and watchful housewife; with whom nevertheless he lives, on as sweet and pleasant terms as if she were as young and lovely as any one could desire; and scarcely any husband obtains from his wife by masterfulness and severity as much compliance as he does by blandishments and jests. Indeed, what more compliance could he have, when he has induced a woman who is already elderly, who is not naturally of a yielding character, and whose mind is occupied with business, to learn to play on the harp, the viol, the spinet and the flute, and to give up every day a prescribed time to practice? With similar kindness he rules his whole household, in which there are no tragic incidents, and no quarrels. If anything of the kind should be likely, he either calms it down, or applies a remedy at once. And in parting with any member of his household he has never acted in a hostile spirit, or treated him as an enemy. Indeed his house seems to have a sort of fatal felicity, no one having lived in it without being advanced to higher fortune, no inmate having ever had a stain upon his character.

It would be difficult to find any one living on such terms with a mother as he does with his step-mother. For his father had brought in one step-mother after another; and he has been as affectionate with each of them as with a mother. He has lately introduced a third, and More swears that he never saw anything better. His affection for his parents, children and sisters is such, that he neither wearies them with his love, nor ever fails in any kindly attention.

His character is entirely free from any touch of avarice. He has set aside out of his property what he thinks sufficient for his children, and spends the rest in a liberal fashion. When he was still dependent on his profession, he gave every client true and friendly counsel with an eye to their advantage rather than his own, generally advising them, that the cheapest thing they could do was to come to terms with their opponents. If he could not persuade them to do this, he pointed out how they might go to law at least expense; for there are some people whose character leads them to delight in litigation.

In the City of London, where he was born, he acted for some years as judge in civil causes. This office, which is by no means burdensome,—inasmuch as the Court sits only on Thursdays before dinner,—is considered highly honorable; and no judge ever

disposed of more suits, or conducted himself with more perfect integrity. In most cases he remitted the fees which are due from the litigants, the practice being for the plaintiff to deposit three groats before the hearing, and the defendant a like sum, and no more being allowed to be exacted. By such conduct he made himself extremely popular in the City.

He had made up his mind to be contented with this position, which was sufficiently dignified without being exposed to serious dangers. He has been thrust more than once into an embassy, in the conduct of which he has shown great ability; and King Henry in consequence would never rest until he dragged him into his Court. "Dragged him," I say, and with reason; for no one was ever more ambitious of being admitted into a Court, than he was anxious to escape it. But as this excellent monarch was resolved to pack his household with learned, serious, intelligent and honest men, he especially insisted upon having More among them—with whom he is on such terms of intimacy that he cannot bear to let him go. If serious affairs are in hand, no one gives wiser counsel; if it pleases the King to relax his mind with agreeable conversation, no man is better company. Difficult questions are often arising, which require a grave and prudent judge; and these questions are resolved by More in such a way, that both sides are satisfied. And yet no one has ever induced him to accept a present. What a blessing it would be for the world, if magistrates like More were everywhere put in office by sovereigns!

Meantime there is no assumption of superiority. In the midst of so great a pressure of business he remembers his humble friends; and from time to time he returns to his beloved studies. Whatever authority he derives from his rank, and whatever influence he enjoys by the favor of a powerful sovereign, are employed in the service of the public, or in that of his friends. It has always been part of his character to be most obliging to everybody, and marvelously ready with his sympathy; and this disposition is more conspicuous than ever, now that his power of doing good is greater. Some he relieves with money, some he protects by his authority, some he promotes by his recommendation, while those whom he cannot otherwise assist are benefited by his advice. No one is sent away in distress, and you might call him the general patron of all poor people. He counts it a

great gain to himself, if he has relieved some oppressed person, made the path clear for one that was in difficulties, or brought back into favor one that was in disgrace. No man more readily confers a benefit, no man expects less in return. And successful as he is in so many ways—while success is generally accompanied by self-conceit—I have never seen any mortal being more free from this failing.

I now propose to turn to the subject of those studies which have been the chief means of bringing More and me together. In his first youth his principal literary exercises were in verse. He afterwards wrestled for a long time to make his prose more smooth; practicing his pen in every kind of writing in order to form that style, the character of which there is no occasion for me to recall, especially to you, who have his books always in your hands. He took the greatest pleasure in declamations, choosing some disputable subject, as involving a keener exercise of mind. Hence, while still a youth, he attempted a dialogue, in which he carried the defence of Plato's community even to the matter of wives! He wrote an answer to Lucian's *Tyrannicide*, in which argument it was his wish to have me for a rival, in order to test his own proficiency in this kind of writing.

He published his *Utopia* for the purpose of showing, what are the things that occasion mischief in commonwealths; having the English constitution especially in view, which he so thoroughly knows and understands. He had written the second book at his leisure, and afterwards, when he found it was required, add'd the first off-hand. Hence there is some inequality in the style.

It would be difficult to find any one more successful in speaking *ex tempore*, the happiest thoughts being attended by the happiest language; while a mind that catches and anticipates all that passes, and a ready memory, having everything as it were in stock, promptly supply whatever the time, or the occasion, demands. In disputation nothing can be imagined more acute, so that the most eminent theologians often find their match, when he meets them on their own ground. Hence John Colet, a man of keen and exact judgment, is wont to say in familiar conversation, that England has only one genius, whereas that island abounds in distinguished intellects.

However averse he may be from all superstition, he is a steady adherent of true piety; having regular hours for his prayers,

which are not uttered by rote, but from the heart. He talks with his friends about a future life in such a way as to make you feel that he believes what he says, and does not speak without the best hope. Such is More, even at Court; and there are still people who think that Christians are only to be found in monasteries! Such are the persons, whom a wise King admits into his household, and into his chamber; and not only admits, but invites, nay, compels them to come in. These he has by him as the constant witnesses and judges of his life—as his advisers and traveling companions. By these he rejoices to be accompanied, rather than by dissolute young men or by fops, or even by decorated grandees, or by crafty ministers, of whom one would lure him to silly amusements, another would incite him to tyranny, and a third would suggest some fresh schemes for plundering his people. If you had lived at this Court, you would, I am sure, give a new description of Court life, and cease to be *Misaulos*; though you too live with such a prince, that you cannot wish for a better, and have some companions like Stromer and Copp, whose sympathies are on the right side. But what is that small number compared with such a swarm of distinguished men as Mountjoy, Linacre, Pace, Colet, Skokesley, Latimer, More, Tunstall, Clerk, and others like them, any one of whose names signifies at once a world of virtues and accomplishments? However, I have no mean hope, that Albert, who is at this time the one ornament of our Germany, will attach to his household a multitude of persons like himself, and set a notable example to other princes; so that they may exert themselves in their own circles to do the like.

You have now before you an ill-drawn portrait, by a poor artist, of an excellent original! You will be still less pleased with the portrait, if you come to have a closer acquaintance with More himself. But meantime I have made sure of this, that you will not be able to charge me with neglecting your command, nor continue to find fault with the shortness of my letters; though even this one has not seemed too long to me in writing it, and will not, I am confident, appear prolix to you, as you read it; our More's sweetness will secure that. However,—not to leave unanswered your last letter, which I read in print before I saw it in writing,—I have been informed of the kindness of the most illustrious Prince Albert by his own letter to me.

But how, I should like to know, has it come to pass, that that cup has reached every one by means of your letter before it has come to me? You certainly could not have sent it more safely by any one than by Richard Pace, the ambassador of the English king, whether I was in Brabant or in England.

You, I see, are doing vigorous battle both with the pen and with the sword,—successfully too, as well as bravely! For I hear you are in great favor with the Cardinal of Gaëta. I am glad that we have good news of *Capnio*. If Literature allows the name of Franz von Sickingen to die, she may fairly be taxed with ingratitude.

For our own news, there will be another occasion. Only this at present; business is conducted at this Court by the meanest sycophancy,—a trade to which I must confess myself unequal. If there is any one of your acquaintance who wants to learn it, I will point him out a wonderful master of this accomplishment,—one, of whom you may say that he was evidently born for it. Cicero was not a more successful orator than he a sycophant; and he finds many docile pupils among us! The right time is not come, but before long I will introduce the man to you, so that he may obtain the glory which he well deserves, and of which he is sadly ambitious. He will then be celebrated in the letters of all the learned, as a portent rather than a man. Farewell.

Antwerp, 23 July, [1517].

BJÖRNSTJERNE MARTINIUS BJÖRNSEN

1832-1910

A Norse novelist, dramatist, poet, and social reformer. After a wild youth he landed at Copenhagen, where he began to write with the purpose of creating a Norse renaissance. It was only in 1884 that his incessant struggle by speech and pen and deed on the side of liberalism, independence and reform was crowned with political success. In 1903 he received the Nobel prize for literature. His literary work is multitudinous, and includes poems and dramas, many of which are based on the ancient Norse sagas, and novels and short stories of peasant life, which continue to exercise a profound influence on European literature.

THE FATHER

THE man whose story is here to be told was the wealthiest and most influential person in his parish; his name was Thord Overaas. He appeared in the priest's study one day, tall and earnest.

"I have gotten a son," said he, "and I wish to present him for baptism."

"What shall his name be?"

"Finn—after my father."

"And the sponsors?"

They were mentioned, and proved to be the best men and women of Thord's relations in the parish.

"Is there anything else?" inquired the priest, and looked up.

The peasant hesitated a little.

"I should like very much to have him baptized by himself," said he, finally.

"That is to say on a week-day?"

"Next Saturday, at twelve o'clock noon."

"Is there anything else?" inquired the priest.

"There is nothing else;" and the peasant twirled his cap, as though he were about to go.

Then the priest rose. "There is yet this, however," said he, and walking toward Thord, he took him by the hand and looked gravely into his eyes: "God grant that the child may become a blessing to you!"

One day sixteen years later, Thord stood once more in the priest's study.

"Really, you carry your age astonishingly well, Thord," said the priest; for he saw no change whatever in the man.

"That is because I have no troubles," replied Thord.

To this the priest said nothing, but after a while he asked: "What is your pleasure this evening?"

"I have come this evening about that son of mine who is to be confirmed tomorrow."

"He is a bright boy."

"I did not wish to pay the priest until I heard what number the boy would have when he takes his place in church tomorrow."

"He will stand number one."

"So I have heard; and here are ten dollars for the priest."

"Is there anything else I can do for you?" inquired the priest, fixing his eyes on Thord.

"There is nothing else."

Thord went out.

Eight years more rolled by, and then one day a noise was heard outside of the priest's study, for many men were approaching, and at their head was Thord, who entered first.

The priest looked up and recognized him.

"You come well attended this evening, Thord," said he.

"I am here to request that the banns may be published for my son; he is about to marry Karen Storliden, daughter of Gudmund, who stands here beside me."

"Why, that is the richest girl in the parish."

"So they say," replied the peasant, stroking back his hair with one hand.

The priest sat a while as if in deep thought, then entered the names in his book, without making any comments, and the men wrote their signatures underneath. Thord laid three dollars on the table.

"One is all I am to have," said the priest.

"I know that very well; but he is my only child, I want to do it handsomely."

The priest took the money.

"This is now the third time, Thord, that you have come here on your son's account."

"But now I am through with him," said Thord, and folding up his pocket-book he said farewell and walked away.

The men slowly followed him.

A fortnight later, the father and son were rowing across the lake, one calm, still day, to Storliden to make arrangements for the wedding.

"This thwart is not secure," said the son, and stood up to straighten the seat on which he was sitting.

At the same moment the board he was standing on slipped from under him; he threw out his arms, uttered a shriek, and fell overboard.

"Take hold of the oar!" shouted the father, springing to his feet and holding out the oar.

But when the son had made a couple of efforts he grew stiff.

"Wait a moment!" cried the father, and began to row toward his son. Then the son rolled over on his back, gave his father one long look, and sank.

Thord could scarcely believe it; he held the boat still, and stared at the spot where his son had gone down, as though he must surely come to the surface again. There rose some bubbles, then some more, and finally one large one that burst; and the lake lay there as smooth and bright as a mirror again.

For three days and three nights people saw the father rowing round and round the spot, without taking either food or sleep; he was dragging the lake for the body of his son. And toward morning of the third day he found it, and carried it in his arms up and over the hills to his gard.

It might have been about a year from that day, when the priest, late one autumn evening, heard someone in the passage outside his door, carefully trying to find the latch. The priest opened the door, and in walked a tall, thin man, with bowed form and white hair. The priest looked long at him before he recognized him. It was Thord.

"Are you out walking so late?" said the priest, and stood still in front of him.

"Ah, yes! it is late," said Thord, and took a seat.

The priest sat down also, as though waiting. A long, long silence followed. At last Thord said:

"I have something with me that I should like to give to the poor; I want it to be invested as a legacy in my son's name."

He rose, laid some money on the table, and sat down again. The priest counted it.

"It is a great deal of money," said he.

"It is half the price of my gard. I sold it today."

The priest sat long in silence. At last he asked, but gently:

"What do you propose to do now, Thord?"

"Something better."

They sat there for a while, Thord with downcast eyes, the priest with his eyes fixed on Thord. Presently the priest said, slowly and softly:

"I think your son has at last brought you a true blessing."

"Yes, I think so myself," said Thord, looking up, while two big tears coursed slowly down his cheeks.

MIGUEL DE SAAVEDRA CERVANTES

1547-1616

Cervantes is to Spanish what Shakespeare is to English and Goethe to German literature. He was the fourth of the seven children of an indigent physician, and spent his early years at Valladolid and Madrid. He quitted Madrid suddenly, having apparently become involved in difficulties on account of a love-duel, and at twenty-two was in Rome. He served for a time in the Italian army, taking part in the battle of Lepanto where he lost his left hand, and in 1575 set out by sea for Spain. The vessel being captured by pirates he became a slave in Algiers. Five years later he was ransomed, and returned to Madrid to earn a precarious living by writing and acting as deputy-collector in the department of naval stores. His dreary existence was somewhat brightened by a happy marriage. In 1603 he began to write, a chapter or two a week, "Don Quixote," and made himself immortal. Besides this great work Cervantes wrote many plays and short stories, which would be negligible, but for the fact that they are from his hand. The following is a good example of his short stories.

RINCONETE AND CORTADILLO

ON THE confines of Alcudia, between the provinces of Castile and Andalusia, might be seen a notable house of entertainment for travelers, called the *Little Windmill*. On one of the hottest days of summer, two boys were seen loitering about this place; one was about fourteen years of age, and the other might perhaps have attained his seventeenth year. They were both good looking, though in a sadly destitute condition; coats they had none; their trousers were of coarse linen, and, for want of better stockings, they were obliged to be contented with their bare skin.

It is true that their feet were covered, those of one being carefully bound in straw or rushes, while the shoes of the other were of so peculiar a formation, that it would seem the utmost ingenuity of the wearer had been displayed, in rendering them more than usually accessible to the elements of air and water. The head of one was partly covered by a scanty cap; the other wore a hat, though without seeming to trouble himself about its deficiency of crown and brim. The scanty remains of a shirt of the color of chamois leather partly adorned the neck and shoulders of the younger; while his companion had remedied the inconvenience of such a deficiency by the waistband of an old pair of trousers, covered with grease and completely in tatters, which

hung suspended from his neck on his breast, and appeared to conceal a small bundle. In this repository of valuables was concealed a pack of cards of a different shape to those generally used; for by reason of their long service, the corners were so much worn, that they began to assume a circular shape, which had been rendered still more distinct by the application of the scissors, it being found that the circular form was the most durable. Both the youths were much sunburned; their nails were begrimed with dirt, and their skin could hardly be called clean. One was armed with a broken sword, and the other with a yellow-handled knife, which completed their costume.

They sallied from the inn and seated themselves opposite each other, under a sort of covering which serves for a veranda in houses of that description; and the elder, bowing very politely to the other, addressed him with all the air of a man of *ton*. “If I might take the liberty of addressing a gentleman of your distinguished appearance without the ceremony of introduction, I should inquire what part of the country has the honor of claiming you as a resident, and whither you intend to travel?”

“Señor Caballero,” returned the other, with equal ceremony and politeness, “with respect to your first question, I am sorry that I am unable to satisfy your curiosity, being utterly ignorant of it myself; and, as to the second, I lament that I can afford you as little information, for I really don’t know.”

“Why, truly, sir,” said he without the shirt, “if I might give an opinion, you certainly don’t look as though you had dropped from heaven; and if you had, I should not think you would choose this place for your descent—consequently you must be going somewhere.”

“That is very just,” replied the one with the hat; “and yet I have told you the truth, for my country is no longer mine, my father having turned me out: and as to the future, I must trust to chance, which I dare say will put something in my way by which I may get an honest livelihood.”

“And pray, may I ask whether you belong to any profession?” said the original querist.

“No other,” replied the other, or younger, “than running like a hare, leaping like a deer, or using a pair of scissors very delicately, will fit me for.”

“That is all very good and useful,” said his companion, “for

on next Holy Thursday you will find good employment in cutting paper ornaments for the church." "Ah, but my abilities in cutting do not lie that way," said the younger gentleman. "My father, by the blessing of Providence, is a tailor and shoemaker, and he taught me to cut out *antiparas*, which, as I dare say you know, are buskins, used by men in harvest—I obtained such a proficiency in the art, that I might have passed examination as a master, had not my bad fortune deprived me of my employment."

"That will happen to the best of us," remarked the elder cavalier, "and I have always heard that the best abilities have always the worst fortune. But I don't doubt a gentleman of your acquirements has some way of bettering his fortune; and, if my judgment don't deceive me, you possess some other accomplishments, which perhaps your modesty will not allow you to make public." "Why, that is very true," said he of the shirt, laughing, "but, as you say, sir, they are not exactly for the public."

"Well, then," said the other, at the instant, "although I consider myself as discreet as most youth, yet, to give you some confidence in me, I will be open with you, and shall expect the same in return, for it is not without reason that fortune has thrown us together, and I am sure it will be to our loss if we do not become friends. You must know that my name is Pedro de Rincon, and I am a native of Fuenfrida, a place of some note, where my father is a minister of the church, that is to say, he sells the pope's indulgences, being, as the vulgar call him, the Bulero. As I assisted him in his traffic, I acquired such dexterity in making bargains, that few could obtain any advantage over me; but observing one day that I was fonder of the money I received, than of my business, he put a purse of dollars into my hand, and packed me off to Madrid to seek my fortune.

"Amongst the temptations of the city, the contents of my purse soon vanished, and I found myself at last possessed of more wit than fortune. I applied for assistance to those who had assisted *me* to spend my money, but it was perfectly astounding to see the want of recollection evinced by these wretches directly I made known my distress: some positively denied my acquaintance, while others dismissed me with their advice to be more cautious in future. I shrugged my shoulders, but suffered my lot patiently; and turned out to seek my fortune with such readi-

ness, that I did not think of providing myself with any luxuries. I took what I thought most necessary, from the things which remained to me, and amongst others, these cards (at the same time drawing them from their concealment) from which I have managed to derive an honorable subsistence amongst the inns frequented by travelers. I always play at *Vingt-un*, which is a very excellent game for my purpose; and although you see the cards are somewhat the worse for wear, yet, I can assure you, they possess a marvelous virtue for those who understand them; indeed, they have become so familiar to me from long acquaintance, that I know them as well by the back as the front.

"Independently of these advantages, I learned of a certain ambassador a method of handling the cards, by which I am as much at home with their capabilities, as you are in the cutting of *antiparas*. So you see, my honorable sir, that I am in no danger of starving, for let me be in what place I may, there are always persons to be found who are willing to divert themselves with an innocent game; and he who has the least experience, is generally the loser. Now, for example, let us look out for a pigeon amongst these carriers within; we will sit down and play as though in earnest, and if any one wishes to make a third, you will see that he will be the first to lay down his cash."

"With all my heart," returned the younger adventurer, "and I feel much indebted for your frankness, in return for which I can do no otherwise than relate, in a few words, what concerns myself. I am a native of that goodly country situated between Salamanca and Medina del Campo. My father is a tailor, and taught me such a good use of the scissors, that, instead of cutting clothes, I learned to cut purses. My ambition, however, was not to be limited to the narrow precincts of a country village; and I was already disgusted with the treatment of a mother-in-law; leaving my home, therefore, I repaired to Toledo, where, giving a free scope to my abilities, I did wonders. There was no rosary, let it be hung ever so carefully, and no pocket however ingeniously contrived, that my fingers did not visit, or my scissors divide—even though they were guarded by the eyes of Argus. I can assure you, that, during the four months I resided in that city, I managed to escape all inconveniences. I was never caught between double doors; never taken off my guard; fell not into the hands of the constables, nor became the dupe of an in-

former.

"It is now, however, about eight days since, that a spy of the police gave notice of me to the corregidor, who, being a great admirer of people of talent, expressed an anxious desire to be acquainted with me; my extreme modesty, for which I am remarkable, prevented me that honor; for thinking myself neither by birth nor education qualified to move in such distinguished society, I was obliged to disappoint his worship, by withdrawing myself from Toledo. I effected my removal with such haste, that I actually did not allow myself time to procure a coach, to provide myself with linen, or indeed any of those conveniences with which gentlemen usually travel; and here I am as you see me."

"Really that was very amusing," said Rincon, grinning; "but now as we know each other, I think it is time to drop our gentility, and confess that we have not anything in the world but what we stand in."

"There is no use in mincing the matter," quoth Diego Cortado, for by such name he called himself, "it is even as you say; and since our friendship ought to be lasting, Señor Rincon, I think we should commence it by a proper manifestation of our feelings"; and then rising, both the gentlemen embraced each other with great apparent cordiality and good will. This little ceremony completing their good understanding, they sat down to play with the above-mentioned cards, having cleaned them from dust and straw, though not from grease and certain deceitful signs; and in a few hands Cortado became as clever at the game as his master Rincon.

At this time one of the carriers came out, when, seeing the two boys at play, he asked them whether they had any objection to a third, to which they good-naturedly consented. Fortune favored the boys so well, that in less than half an hour the carrier lost twelve reals, and twenty-two maravedis, which in paying cost him just as many twinges of regret. The loser, however, seeing his adversaries were only boys, thought he could take his money from them again with impunity; but the one drew his piece of a sword, and the other handled his knife so formidably, that had not the carrier's companions come to his succor, it was likely to have gone ill with him.

At this time a troop of people passed on horseback, who, see-

ing the disturbance between the boys and the carrier, parted them, and told the former they were going to pass the night about a league further, whither, if they pleased, they might accompany them. "We will go with pleasure," said Rincon, "and anything we can do in return, we shall be most happy"; and, without further invitation, they jumped up on two of the mules and set forward with the party, leaving the carrier in no very enviable state of temper. The landlord could not help laughing at the dexterity of the young rogues; for he confessed he had overheard their conversation, and thus learned that the cards were false. At this discovery, the carrier could hardly contain himself for rage. He swore the most formidable oaths, and declared his intention of following the young sharpers and reclaiming his lost pieces—not that he valued the money, as he said; but from pure shame to think that so great a man as he should be cheated by two such very little rogues. His companion, however, endeavored to pacify him, saying, "It was much better to abide by the loss, than to get laughed at for his simplicity."

The two companions now congratulated themselves on their good fortune, and made themselves so useful to their fellow-travelers, that they were allowed to mount behind them the best part of the way; and although many opportunities occurred of exercising their professional abilities with advantage, yet they desisted, from the consideration that they might endanger their journey to Seville, whither they were going. However, on entering the city by the Aduana gate, Cortado was not able to resist the temptation of cutting open the portmanteau of a Frenchman, behind whom he was mounted. His knife was handy on all occasions, and he inflicted so grievous a wound on the valise, that he presently discovered its contents, and selected from them two shirts, a small sun-dial, and a memorandum book. These things, it is true, were of little value; but they served to replenish their purse, which was now exhausted, with twenty reals.

Having secured this, they went to view the city, of which they had heard so much; the cathedral excited their admiration, and they were astonished at the great concourse of people on the river. The galleys, likewise, did not escape their observation, and an involuntary sigh escaped from each, as his thoughts naturally anticipated the time when he might have a closer view of them.

They were surprised to see such a number of boys with bas-

kets, plying for hire; and they took the opportunity of asking one the nature of his office—whether it was laborious—and what was the gain? It was an Asturian boy of whom they made the inquiry, and he replied, "That the business was easy enough—that they paid no duty—and that on some days they gained five reals, and on others six, as it might happen—with which they lived the life of a king—free to seek any master that paid them well—and then they enjoyed themselves after their own fashion."

This account of the Asturian pleased the two friends mightily; for the anticipation of carrying the goods of others seemed highly favorable to their peculiar abilities, and they forthwith determined to purchase the necessary equipment for their new profession. The Asturian told them it would be necessary to buy some small bags, and three baskets, for fish, flesh, and fruit—the bags to be used solely for bread; and that when provided with these necessaries, they were to attend in the mornings at the flesh-market, in the square of San Salvador—on fast-days at the fish-market—and in the evening they were to look for employment at the river side. This instruction the two friends committed to memory; and having purchased what was necessary with the spoils of the Frenchman, they planted themselves the next morning in the square of San Salvador. They had not been there long, before their new baskets attracted the attention of the other boys, who soon flocked around them, anxious to know whence they came, and everything concerning them; to all which the friends gave those answers which might have been expected from young persons of their talent and discretion.

At this time a soldier and a student came up, who liking the cleanliness of the baskets, the former called Rincon, and the student beckoned Cortado. Rincon, by way of commencing his office, bowed very humbly to his employer, and said, "I hope your honor will not forget that I am a beginner."

"Never fear," said the soldier, "your reward shall not be amiss, for I can afford to be liberal—I am going to give a feast today to some friends of my mistress."

"Then pray load me as much as you please," returned the youth, "for I have both the will and the strength to carry the whole market; aye, and sugar to season it withal, if such be your honor's pleasure."

The soldier was so well pleased with the quickness of the

youth, that he told him, if he desired to quit his present employment, he would take him into his service. Rincon replied with many thanks, saying, "That as he was so newly entered on the office, he wished to see whether it would turn out well or ill; but, in case of failure, he should not have the honor of serving so respectable a gentleman, because he had given his word to a priest." The soldier laughed, and gave him a good load, directing him to the house of his mistress, and desiring him to remember it well, as he would have occasion to go there often; he then gave him three quartos, and dismissed him. Rincon returned with the utmost speed to the square, lest he should lose an opportunity; for the Asturian had cautioned him to be diligent and trustworthy; although in carrying small fish, or such like commodity, there was no harm, he said, in taking a little from a quantity which could not be missed; but on no account to take it if there should be the least chance of detection, as credit was the soul of their trade.

Cortado returned just about the same time as Rincon, who, showing his companion the three quartos, asked him what luck he had met with? Cortado, putting his hand into his breast, drew out a purse which seemed to have been made in times past, but was nevertheless well stocked with money, and said, "His reverence has done me the favor to pay me with this purse, and with these two quartos; but take the purse, Rincon, lest his worship may change his mind." Rincon had hardly secreted the purse, when back came the student, perspiring at every pore, and in the utmost agitation and perplexity; coming to Cortado, "My good boy," said he, "have you by chance seen a purse of such and such marks, containing fifteen crowns of gold, three reals, and so many maravedis in quartos, only wanting the few pieces with which I paid for the meat which you carried?"

Cortado replied, without moving a muscle of his countenance. "All I can say to your reverence is that your purse would not have been lost had you taken better care of it."

"That is but too true, sinner that I am," returned the student, "for had I taken better care of it, some rascal could never have robbed me."

"That is exactly what I think," said Cortado; "but as your reverence knows there is a remedy for all things but death, now I should advise your reverence to avail yourself of the first and

principal, which is patience, for it is recommended by God. One day follows another; and he that gives takes away; so in like manner the time may arrive, that he who has stolen your purse may repent and restore it, even in better condition than he found it."

"That I will excuse," interrupted the student.

"For my part," continued Cortado, "I would not be the stealer of the purse for a trifle; for as your reverence is in sacred orders, it is neither more nor less than sacrilege."

"You say right," said the afflicted student, "for though I am no priest, but only the sacristan of a convent, the money I have lost is the third of a chaplain's salary, which is left in my charge, and therefore it is blessed and holy coin."

"As you have made your bread so must you eat it," said Cortado, in a condoling manner; "but the day of judgment will arrive, and then we shall see the rogue who was hardened enough to steal the chaplain's salary. And pray what might the situation of your friend be worth per annum, with regard to salary, Señor Sacristan?" asked Cortado, innocently.

"Salary of the devil," returned the sacristan, incensed beyond measure at what appeared to be trifling with him. "Is this a time to talk about salary? Tell me, my friend, do you know anything of the purse? If so, say; if not, God be with you; for I must go and have it cried."

"That is the best thing you can do," said Cortado, "and remember," he added, calling after him, "that you are very particular about the description of the purse and the exact sum contained therein, for if you make the mistake of a single farthing, you will never see your purse again in this world; I only say this, sir, by way of advice."

"There is no fear of that, my friend," returned the sacristan. "I have it so truly in my memory that I shall not mistake a single thread." Saying this, he drew from his pocket a handkerchief to wipe the perspiration from his countenance; a movement not lost on Cortado, who immediately seemed to take a more vivid interest in the poor man's loss, and suggested several expedients for its recovery. The advice of Cortado was given in so vague a manner, that the sacristan was tempted to ask a repetition; during which, Cortado, taking advantage of the sacristan's anxiety, contrived to beguile him of his handkerchief, when,

with many expressions of condolence, he took his leave, recommending him to use all diligence in the recovery of his property; and then returned to Rincon.

"What have you been so busy about with the student?" inquired his companion.

"Why, I have been listening to the poor gentleman's distress, which I protest has so affected me, that I was under the necessity of borrowing his handkerchief," replied the young wag, at the same time producing it, and applying it to his eyes.

The two young rogues then indulged in some merriment at the expense of the poor sacristan; but Cortado had not effected the latter transfer so secretly as to escape the observation of a lad who had been watching him. "Pray, gentlemen," said he, advancing towards them, "may I ask of what profession you call yourselves?" "We don't understand you, sir," replied Rincon. "I ask you, gentlemen, whether you are from Murcia," repeated the youth. "Neither from Murcia nor from Thebes," responded Cortado, "and if you have nothing further to say, I wish you a good morning."

"You don't choose to understand me, eh! my masters?" said the querist, "but I think I could soon make you understand—aye, and teach you to eat pap out of a spoon. What I wish to ask of you, gentlemen, is merely whether your honors are thieves, or no? although it is a useless question, because I already see that you are; but I must inquire with more reason, whether you have paid your footing to the Señor Monipodio?"

"Do thieves pay taxes in this country, my fair sir?" asked Rincon. "If they do not actually pay, at least they are registered by the Señor Monipodio, who is their father and their master; therefore I should counsel you to come with me for that purpose, or perhaps you will have cause to repent it."

"I always thought," said Cortado, "that thieving was a free trade, without any duty or impost; and if the professors paid at all, it was only at the stocks, or over the back and shoulders. But as every country has its own peculiar regulations, so we shall be happy to conform to yours, if we might make bold to ask a gentleman of your respectable appearance, to guide us to the abode of the worthy cavalier of whom you speak, where we will prove our proficiency in the science."

"That is well," said the other, "and you will see how well

qualified our master is for his situation. Why! during the four years he has had charge of us, not more than four have suffered the capital punishment. But come along, and on the road I will explain to you a little of our vocabulary, which it will be necessary for you to know." During this walk, which was not very short, their new acquaintance instructed them in the language of the craft, very much to the edification of the novice. "And pray, sir," asked Rincon, "may I venture to inquire whether you are a thief yourself?" "Yes, sir; that is to say, by the blessing of God and the prayers of good people, I hope I shall be, although I am not yet out of my novitiate."

"Well," said Cortado, "you will excuse me for the remark; but although I have seen and heard a good deal, I never yet heard of thieving by the grace of God and the prayers of good people."

"Sir," replied the guide, "I am no theologian, and therefore cannot argue on the subject; but this I know, that everybody ought to praise God in the vocation to which Providence has been pleased to call him; and the more so as our master Monipodia has expressly ordered it."

"Doubtless that gentleman must be of a very religious turn," said Rincon, "since he makes his thieves praise God."

"He is the most exemplary man of our profession," returned the youth; "he orders that a part of everything which is stolen shall be set apart to buy oil for the lamp of an image in the city, which is possessed of marvelous virtue. Indeed, we have all seen the good effects of it; for it was but the other day, when a friend of ours was condemned to punishment for stealing two asses, and he bore it without a single cry, as though it was nothing, which can only be attributed to our regular devotion. And you must know that some of our club are so particular that they will not steal on a Friday, nor hold conversation with any woman on a Sabbath whose name is Mary."

"Indeed! this is most exemplary conduct," said Cortado; "but pray do not the priests sometimes order these religious persons to make restitution or penance?"

"No," returned the other, "because they never go to confession; and if letters of excommunication are taken out against them, they are not likely to know it, because they never go to church during the time they are read; excepting, indeed, at the

great holiday, when the crowd of people gathered there makes it a matter of business."

"Pious rogues!" ejaculated Rincon. "And what is the harm of it?" cried the other. "Is it not much worse to be a heretic? or to murder your father and mother?" "Why, that certainly is very bad," said Rincon; "but as fortune is so kind as to allow us to be of this respectable fraternity, I must beg you, sir, to quicken your pace, for I am dying to see our respectable friend Monipodio, of whose virtues you have said so much." "Your praiseworthy impatience shall soon be gratified, for we are already arrived; but you must wait awhile at the portal, while I go within to see whether he is at leisure; for this is the hour he usually gives audience." The companions had just time to survey the house, which was not of the most promising appearance, when their guide reappeared, and called them in. They entered a small courtyard, paved with fanciful brickwork, of a bright red color: on one side was a bench with three legs; and on the other a broken jar, placed on a stand not in a much better condition. In another place was a rush mat, and in the middle was a space for flowers.

The boys observed everything attentively; and as the Señor Monipodio did not make his appearance, they took the liberty of entering the lower room, which adjoined the courtyard. There they beheld two fencing swords, with two shields of cork, suspended on pegs; a large bow without any case, and three more rush mats on the floor. On the front wall was placed an image of the Virgin, of no great merit in its workmanship; under which was seen a small basket, and a white basin; serving, as Rincon shrewdly conjectured, the former to receive alms, and the latter for holy water.

While they were waiting, there arrived two young men about twenty years of age, dressed as students; shortly afterwards came two of their brothers of the basket, and a blind man, who all walked about the open space without speaking a word to each other. Shortly after them came two elderly persons in spectacles; they looked grave and respectable, and carried in their hands goodsized rosaries. An old woman next arrived, who immediately on her entrance went to the image of the Virgin, and having taken the holy water with great devotion, prostrated herself before the image. Having indulged in this pious occupation some

time, she arose, put a small offering into the basket, kissed the floor three times, lifted her hands and eyes to heaven, and then rejoined the others in the courtyard. Lastly appeared, to give additional grace to the company, two bravos, of most sinister aspect; with large whiskers, slouched hats, and ruffled collars. They were armed with enormous swords, several pistols, and targets hanging from their belts. The moment these worthies cast their eyes on the two friends, they came to them and inquired whether they belonged to the fraternity? Rincon answered in the affirmative, making great demonstration of respect, which the formidable appearance of the querists seemed to demand. At this moment arrived the long-expected Señor Monipodio, to the great joy of the respectable company assembled.

He seemed about forty-five years of age, tall of stature, his countenance of a sullen hue, with sunken eyes, eyebrows joined in the center, and a black bushy beard. He was dressed in a shirt, and covered with a huge cloak reaching to his feet, on which were a pair of old shoes down at the heels. He wore loose trousers of linen, and a hat used by the lowest vagabonds, bell-shaped at the crown, and large in the brim. Across his shoulders was a belt, to which was suspended a short and stout sword. His hands were short, with fat fingers and long nails; and his feet were a pair, but not matched.

In short, the appearance of this gentleman, whose reputation had been so strenuously supported, was anything but favorable, he being, unfortunately, one of the most ill-looking, misshapen barbarians in the world. The youth who had acted as guide to Rincon and his friend, now led them forward, and presented them to the dignitary, saying, "These are the two gentlemen of whom I spoke to your worship. If you please, you can examine them, and see whether they are worthy to enter our brotherhood."

"That I will do with much pleasure," replied Monipodio, to whom, be it observed, the whole company bowed respectfully on his entrance, except the two bravos, who, considering themselves artists of a higher order, merely saluted him by touching their hats.

Monipodio, having made the tour of the courtyard to see his visitors, then asked the newcomers their profession, name, and country. Rincon answered that their profession did not need

much explanation, and as to the rest, it was but of little importance, as such information was never expected from those who were to receive orders of distinction. "You are right, young man," returned the worthy, "it is always proper to conceal such truths;—for example, if business did not go well, it would not be very agreeable for your parents to see in the public book, that *so and so*, son of *so and so*, of such a place, stood in the pillory, or was flogged, on such a day, for such a theft; no, no, you are right; and to prevent such inconveniences, everybody ought to have a designation of his own choosing, therefore we only require your names." This was complied with by the two candidates, when Monipodio said, "It is my pleasure, gentlemen, that henceforward you adopt the names of Rinconete and Cortadillo, for those which you at present bear, and which, I think, will be quite adapted to your pursuits. It is likewise necessary to make a private communication of the names of your parents, as it is a custom with us once a year to say masses for the souls of those that are no more, which expense is defrayed from a common fund, appropriated for the benefit of the community, such as paying the lawyer who defends us, the priest who advises us, and to reward those our worthy friends who, when a hue and cry is raised after any of our members, appease the losers, by telling them that God will punish the wicked." "These are excellent regulations," said Rinconete, who had already accommodated himself to his new appellation; "I cannot sufficiently admire the sagacity of their compiler; but, Señor, our parents have no need of the pious assistance of the brotherhood, being still in the land of the living. If a change should happily occur, we will not fail to inform you."

"That is well," said Monipodio; who then beckoned the boy who had introduced them. "Ganchoso," said the great man, "are the sentinels placed?" "Yes, sir, there are three placed to prevent any surprise." "Very good," returned the professor, "and now let us proceed to business! Rinconette, let me hear what are your attainments."

"Sir," replied he, "I possess a little spice of art; I can handle cards well, know how to turn an ace to a king, and little maneuvers of that sort; I know the table of chances better than the ten commandments, and have learnt that a stolen guinea is better than a borrowed crown." "That is very good as a beginning."

said Monipodio, "but, as you must be aware, these are merely the groundwork of the art. However, with the assistance of a dozen lessons, by the blessing of God, I hope to make you a respectable artist." Rinconete bowed, and returned thanks to the master, who called on Cortadillo to state his qualifications.

"Sir," said Cortadillo, "I have learnt the rule of arithmetic, which says, 'put in two and take out five'; and I know how to dive into a pocket with ease and safety."

"Is that all?" said Monipodio. "That is all, to my misfortune," said Cortadillo.

"Never mind," said the professor, "you are in a good school, where, doubtless, you will soon improve, if you will follow my instructions."

"We have all the desire to improve in everything that touches our art and occupation," replied Rinconete.

"Very good," said Monipodio, "but I should like to know how you could endure, upon occasion, a dozen lashes without opening your lips, even as much as to say, 'This mouth is mine.'"

"We are not so misinstructed," said Cortadillo, "as not to know, that what the tongue borrows sometimes the throat pays; and heaven have mercy on the poor devil who does not know it is as easy to say *no*, as *yes*."

"That is enough," said Monipodio, "I see you are a youth of talent; I am quite satisfied with you, and shall enter you forthwith on our company as a full member, without serving any novitiate, or paying any duty." The company declared their full approbation of the award of their superior, and complimented the newly elected brother; when one of the sentinels came running in, saying, that the alguazil of vagabonds was coming towards the house at full speed.

"You need not disturb yourselves," said Monipodio to his friends, some of whom began to evidence signs of embarrassment, "this alguazil is a particular friend of mine, and never comes with any hostile intentions; I will presently see what he wants." Every one was quieted with this intimation, and Monipodio went to the door to speak to his friend, with whom he was some little time in conversation. On his return, he asked who had occupied the square of San Salvador that morning.

"I was there," replied the guide. "Then how is it that you have not given notice of a purse, which you took there, containing

fifteen gold crowns, two reals, and some quartos," asked Monipodio. "Why, sir," replied the boy, "the fact is, that I have never seen the purse; I have not taken it—worse luck for me—and I cannot imagine who has."

"No nonsense with me, sir," said Monipodio; "the purse must and shall be forthcoming; the alguazil is an intimate friend, and has done us great service." The boy protested in the strongest terms, that he had no knowledge of it; when Monipodio began to show symptoms of ire. "No one shall dare to play tricks with me," said he, his eyes sparkling with anger: "produce the purse, or take the consequences." The boy again asserted his innocence, which only increased the master's rage, and excited the feelings of the whole community against the delinquent who had offended against the laws; when Rinconete, finding it would be a serious disturbance, consulted a moment with Cortadillo, who thought with him it would be better to appease the anger of Monipodio: therefore, drawing forth the sacristan's purse, he said, "Calm yourselves, my worthy masters, for here is the purse which the alguazil requires, and likewise a handkerchief which my companion borrowed from the same worthy gentleman this morning." The countenance of the professor immediately brightened at this confession, and he exclaimed, "Cortadillo the Good, for by such distinction shall you henceforward be known—keep the handkerchief, and content yourself this time with having rendered us a signal service; for the sacristan, whose acquaintance you made this morning, is a relative of the alguazil, who is one of our best friends; therefore, we must comply with the proverb, which says, 'To him who gives you a fowl it is not much to send a leg'; and the alguazil winks at more in a single day, than we could compass in a hundred." Much approbation was manifested by the company at this generous act; and they fully agreed in the justice of the encomium bestowed on Cortadillo, who remained as proud of his title as other worthy and distinguished men, who have acquired the like honor from their virtues or other qualities.

Before the return of Monipodio, two girls entered the apartment, who from their address and manner, Rinconete easily guessed to belong to the community. They were welcomed very warmly by the two bravos, Chiquiznaque and Maniferro, the latter so called from having lost a hand by the course of law, and its place being supplied by one of iron. "Well, what news, my

charmer?" said one. "What do you bring for the good of the club?" "You will see directly," replied one of the girls, called Gananciosa; "Silvatillo is coming."

She had hardly spoken these words, when a boy entered, bearing a large basket covered with a sheet. The good people seemed all very much delighted with the appearance of Silvatillo; and Monipodio, taking one of the rush mats, placed it in the middle, and invited his friends to place themselves round it; then, uncovering the basket, which contained abundance of eatables, he desired every one to carve for himself. There was no want of good-will in obeying this injunction, and the knives of the guests were put in requisition; Cortadillo making use of his scanty sword in lieu of a better and more appropriate weapon. The contents of the basket were soon dispatched; and some elderly gentlemen who were of the party, obtained permission to leave, having, as they said, some important business to attend. These reverend members of the community, it appeared, were of the utmost utility; obtaining access by the respectability of their age to houses of consideration, and then ascertaining their value, and facilities for plunder, with which they did not fail to acquaint their worthy employer.

The meal was scarcely finished before a disturbance was heard within, and one of the scouts came running in to inform them that the justice, followed by a whole *posse comitatus*, was advancing to the house. In an instant all was confusion; the remains of the feast were scattered on all sides. Bravos and priests, old and young, lame and blind, instantly betook themselves to their different hiding-places for refuge; and in an instant, the scene of hilarity became as tranquil as though there had been no revelers there. Cortadillo and his friend remained, because they knew not whither to fly; and Monipodio, secure in conscious innocence, as master of the house awaited the coming storm.

It proved after all a groundless alarm. The justice passed on his way to some other quarters, and the runaways were about to be recalled, when a cavalier was introduced, who seemed to be known to Monipodio, who ordered the bravos to be called down, but no others. "How is it," said the cavalier, "that you have not executed my commands?"

"I do not know what has been done in the business," replied Monipodio, "but hear the artist who had the affair in

hand, and I will answer for it he can give you good reason." He then called Chiquiznaque to give an account of his commission.

"Is it of the merchant in the crossway?" asked the man of office.

"The same," said the cavalier.

"Ah! I watched for him last night at the very door of his house," rejoined the bravo, "and when he came I looked him full in the face, which I found to be so very small, that there was positively not space enough for the fourteen slashes that you ordered me to give him; therefore I could not complete your destruction."

"My destruction!" echoed the cavalier; crossing himself. "God forbid! My instructions, suppose the gentleman means to say."

"Yes," said the unperturbed Chiquiznaque, "that is what I mean. But lest you should say I am not a man of honor, and have neglected my duty, I gave the required number of slashes on the face of his lackey, who, I warrant, can show the marks."

"What use is that to me," said the cavalier; "I had rather that the master had seven than the lackey fourteen; however, you will have no more than the money I left, and I will bid you a good morning." Saying this, he took off his hat, and, bowing to the gentlemen, was about to leave, when Señor Montipedio caught him by the skirt. "Stay, sir, if you please," said he, "and as we have acted honorably in this affair, we shall expect you will do so likewise; there are twenty ducats wanting, which we must have before you leave."

"What do you call acting honorably?" said the cavalier. "Is it giving the punishment to the man that was intended for the master?"

"His honor forgets the proverb that says, 'Love me, love my dog,'" said Chiquiznaque. "And what the devil has that to do with the case?" asked the cavalier. "A great deal," replied the other, "for the same rule reversed must be equally true; therefore, 'Hate me, hate my dog,' is applicable here, and our conditions are thus honorably fulfilled."

"Come, your honor must not split straws with your servants," observed the professor, "but take my advice, and pay what has been honestly earned; and if you are contented to give an order that can be executed on the master, it shall be punctually performed."

"If you will do that," said the cavalier, "I'll pay it willingly." "It shall be done as I am a Christian," said the master. "I'll engage that Chiquiznaque shall make both master and man so like each other, that they shall not be known apart."

"Well, with this promise," said the cavalier, "take this chain for the twenty ducats owing, and forty on account of the business you have in hand. It is worth a thousand reals; but I shall require no change, as I think I shall have occasion shortly to send you to another friend of mine on the same errand." He then took a handsome gold chain from his neck, which was received with the utmost politeness by Monipodio, and Chiquiznaque promised on that very night to wait on the merchant. The cavalier went away very well contented; and the professor then called the members who were absent, and placing himself in the center, drew out his book of memorandums, and gave it to Rinconete to read aloud. The first part of the book was an account of the heavy business which had been paid for by their different employers, such as assassinations, slashing in the face with a poniard, maiming, etc. It began thus:

"Memorandum of the serious business for the week.

"First, The merchant of the crossway to receive fourteen cuts across the face—value fifty crowns—thirty received on account; to be executed by Chiquiznaque." "That is all for this week in that line," said Monipodio; "go on a few leaves further, and see what is to be done under the article of cudgeling."

"First, The master of the Clover-flower eating-house a dozen stripes of the very best quality, at the rate of one crown each—time allowed six days; to be executed by Maniferro." "You may soon rub that out," said Maniferro, "for this is the last night." "Is there any more, my boy?" asked Monipodio. "Yes, sir," said Rinconete, "there is one more. The hunchbacked tailor, commonly called the Goldfinch, six stripes of the best quality, by order of the lady who left the necklace—to be executed by Desmochado (the cropper)."

"I can't think how it is that Desmochado has not completed that order," said Monipodio. "The time has been up these two days." "I met him yesterday," Said Maniferro, "and he told me the hunchback had been ill and was confined to his house." "Ah! I thought so," returned the master; "for I always esteemed Desmochado a good artist and punctual in his obliga-

tions. There is no more, boy; pass on to common assaults." Rinconete found in another page as follows: "Memorandum of common business," such as "blacking the face with a bottle of ink"—"nailing a horn over the doors of cuckolds"—"pretenses at assassination"—"false alarms." "That is enough," said Monipodio; "I undertake all that business, because I make it a rule to keep secret little affairs of delicacy; and would rather nail up twenty horns, than give intelligence of one." The business of the day being then concluded, the names of the new members were entered in the book, during which one of the old respectable looking gentlemen returned, to inform the professor that he had seen the gentleman from Malaga, who informed him that he was so much improved in his art, that now he should not be afraid to play with the very devil, and would wager that he could cheat him with clean cards. He had been prevented from waiting on the master since his tour by illness; but should not fail to be at the general rendezvous on Sunday morning. "I always said that Lovillo would arrive at eminence in his profession," said Monipodio; "he has the best hands I ever saw; and to be a good artist we must have good tools." "I have likewise seen the Jew who acts the clergyman," said the venerable reporter: "he has taken lodgings in the same house with some people whom he hopes to tempt at play; but he will not fail to attend on Sunday." "Ah! the Jew is a great scoundrel," said Monipodio: "I have long had great doubts of his honesty, by his never coming near me. Unless he conducts himself more orderly, I shall strip him of his gown. Have you anything more to say?" "Nothing more at present," returned the old gentleman.

"There, my children; take these fifty reals amongst you for the present," said the master, "and God bless and prosper you in your honest endeavors; and, on Sunday next, I shall expect everybody present without fail, as I have a lecture to give you on the improvement of our art." He then embraced Rinconete and Cortadillo, giving them in charge of their former guide, to conduct them to the boundaries of the walks allotted to them, where they were to be accountable for everything stolen from that district. The company then separated, and the two friends retired with their guide, highly edified and delighted with their visit.

A TALE OF ANCIENT EGYPT SETNA AND THE MAGIC BOOK

The following tale dates from approximately 1400 B.C. The manuscript thereof was found during the nineteenth century in the tomb of a Coptic monk, and is a part of the so-called Doulaq Papyrus. Nothing is known concerning the author of the tale, but scholars conjecture that he flourished not long after the origin of the Egyptian short story, back in the dim pre-historic centuries. At any rate, it is one of the finest examples of this Egyptian art that has come down to us—one of those wonder tales that from immemorial times have evoked the admiration of the world, and particularly of the Orientals.

THE mighty King User.maat.ra (Rameses the Great) had a son named Setna Kha.em.uast who was a great scribe, and very learned in all the ancient writings. And he heard that the magic book of Thoth, by which a man may enchant heaven and earth, and know the language of all birds and beasts, was buried in the cemetery of Memphis. And he went to search for it with his brother An.he.hor.eru; and when they found the tomb of the King's son, Na.nefer.ka.ptah, son of the King of Upper and Lower Egypt, Mer.neb.ptah, Setna opened it and went in.

Now in the tomb was Na.nefer.ka.ptah, and with him was the *ka* of his wife Ahura; for though she was buried at Koptos, her *ka* dwelt at Memphis with her husband, whom she loved. And Setna saw them seated before their offerings, and the book lay between them. And Na.nefer.ka.ptah said to Setna, "Who are you that break into my tomb in this way?" He said, "I am Setna, son of the great King User.maat.ra, living forever, and I come for that book which I see between you." And Na.nefer.ka.ptah said, "It cannot be given to you." Then said Setna, "But I will carry it away by force."

Then Ahura said to Setna, "Do not take this book; for it will bring trouble on you, as it has upon us. Listen to what we have suffered for it."

AHURA'S TALE

"We were the two children of the King Mer.neb.ptah, and he loved us very much, for he had no others; and Na.nefer.ka.ptah was in his palace as heir over all the land. And when we were

grown, the King said to the Queen, 'I will marry Na.nefer.ka.-ptah to the daughter of a general, and Ahura to the son of another general.' And the Queen said, 'No; he is the heir, let him marry his sister, like the heir of a king; none other is fit for him.' And the King said, 'That is not fair; they had better be married to the children of the general.'

"And the Queen said, 'It is you who are **not** dealing rightly with me.' And the King answered, 'If I have no more than these two children, is it right that they should marry one another? I will marry Na.nefer.ka.ptah to the daughter of an officer, and Ahura to the son of another officer. It has often been done so in our family.'

"And at a time when there was a great feast before the King, they came to fetch me to the feast. And I was very troubled, and did not behave as I used to do. And the King said to me, 'Ahura, have you sent someone to me about this sorry matter, saying, "Let me be married to my elder brother"?' I said to him, 'Well, let me marry the son of an officer, and he marry the daughter of another officer, as it often happens so in our family.' I laughed, and the King laughed. And the King told the steward of the palace, 'Let them take Ahura to the house of Na.nefer.-ka.ptah tonight, and all kinds of good things with her.' So they brought me as a wife to the house of Na.nefer.ka.ptah; and the King ordered them to give me presents of silver and gold, and things from the palace.

"And Na.nefer.ka.ptah passed a happy time with me, and received all the presents from the palace; and we loved one another. And when I expected a child, they told the King, and he was most heartily glad; and he sent me many things, and a present of the best silver and gold and linen. And when the time came, I bore this little child that is before you. And they gave him the name of Mer-ab, and registered him in the book of the 'House of life.'

"And when my brother Na.nefer.ka.ptah went to the cemetery of Memphis, he did nothing on earth but read the writings that are in the catacombs of the kings, and the tablets of the 'House of life,' and the inscriptions that are seen on the monuments, and he worked hard on the writings. And there was a priest there called Nesi-ptah; and as Na.nefer.ka.ptah went into a temple to pray, it happened that he went behind this priest, and

was reading the inscriptions that were on the chapels of the gods. And the priest mocked him and laughed. So Na.nefer.ka.ptah said to him, 'Why are you laughing at me?' And he replied, 'I was not laughing at you, or if I happened to do so, it was at your reading writings that are worthless. If you wish so much to read writings, come to me, and I will bring you to the palace where the book is which Thoth himself wrote with his own hand, and which will bring you to the gods. When you read but two pages in this you will enchant the heaven, the earth, the abyss, the mountains, and the sea; you shall know what the birds of the sky and the crawling things are saying; you shall see the fishes of the deep, for a divine power is there to bring them up out of the depth. And when you read the second page, if you are in the world of ghosts, you will become again in the shape you were in on earth. You will see the sun shining in the sky, with all the gods, and the full moon.'

"And Na.nefer.ka.ptah said: 'By the life of the King! Tell me of anything you want done, and I'll do it for you, if you will only send me where this book is.' And the priest answered Na.nefer.ka.ptah, 'If you want to go to the place where the book is, you must give me 100 pieces of silver for my funeral, and provide that they shall bury me as a rich priest.' So Na.nefer.ka-ptah called his lad and told him to give the priest 100 pieces of silver; and he made them do as he wished, even everything that he asked for. Then the priest said to Na.nefer.ka.ptah: 'This book is in the middle of the river at Koptos, in an iron box; in the iron box is a bronze box; in the bronze box is a sycamore box; in the sycamore box is an ivory and ebony box; in the ivory and ebony box is a silver box; in the silver box is a golden box, and in that is the book. It is twisted all round with snakes and scorpions and all the other crawling things around the box in which the book is; and there is a deathless snake by the box.' And when the priest told Na.nefer.ka.ptah, he did not know where on earth he was, he was so much delighted.

"And when he came from the temple he told me all that had happened to him. And he said: 'I shall go to Koptos, for I must fetch this book; I will not stay any longer in the north.' And I said, 'Let me dissuade you, for you prepare sorrow and you will bring me into trouble in the Thebaid.' And I laid my hand on Na.nefer.ka.ptah, to keep him from going to Koptos, but

he would not listen to me ; and he went to the King and told the King all that the priest had said. The King asked him, 'What is it that you want ?' and he replied, 'Let them give me the royal boat with its belongings, for I will go to the south with Ahura and her little boy Mer-ab, and fetch this book without delay.' So they gave him the royal boat with its belongings and we went with him to the haven, and sailed from there up to Koptos.

"Then the priests of Isis of Koptos, and the high-priest of Isis, came down to us without waiting, to meet Na-nefer-ka.ptah, and their wives also came to me. We went into the temple of Isis and Harpokrates ; and Na.nefer.ka.ptah brought an ox, a goose, and some wine, and made a burnt-offering and a drink-offering before Isis of Koptos and Harpokrates. They brought us to a very fine house, with all good things ; and Na.nefer.ka.-ptah spent four days there and feasted with the priests of Isis of Koptos, and the wives of the priests of Isis also made holiday with me.

"And the morning of the fifth day came ; and Na.nefer.ka.ptah called a priest to him, and made a magic cabin that was full of men and tackle. He put the spell upon it, and put life in it, and gave them breath, and sank it in the water. He filled the royal boat with sand, and took leave of me, and sailed from the haven : and I sat by the river at Koptos that I might see what would become of him. And he said, 'Workmen, work for me, even at the place where the book is.' And they toiled by night and by day ; and when they had reached it in three days, he threw the sand out, and made a shoal in the river. And then he found on it entwined serpents and scorpions and all kinds of crawling things around the box in which the book was ; and by it he found a deathless snake around the box. And he laid the spell upon the entwined serpents and scorpions and all kinds of crawling things which were around the box, that they should not come out. And he went to the deathless snake, and fought with him, and killed him ; but he came to life again, and took a new form. He then fought again with him a second time ; but he came to life again, and took a third form. He then cut him in two parts, and put sand between the parts, that he should not appear again.

"Na.nefer.ka.ptah then went to the place where he found the box. He uncovered a box of iron, and opened it ; he found then a box of bronze, and opened that ; then he found a box of syca-

more wood, and opened that; again, he found a box of ivory and ebony, and opened that; yet he found a box of silver, and opened that; and then he found a box of gold; he opened that, and found the book in it. He took the book from the golden box, and read a page of spells from it. He enchanted the heaven and the earth, the abyss, the mountains, and the sea; he knew what the birds of the sky, the fish of the deep, and the beasts of the hills all said. He read another page of the spells, and saw the sun shining in the sky, with all the gods, the full moon, and the stars in their shapes; he saw the fishes of the deep, for a divine power was present that brought them up from the water. He then read the spell upon the workmen that he had made, and taken from the haven, and said to them, 'Work for me, back to the place from which I came.' And they toiled night and day, and so he came back to the place where I sat by the river of Koptos; I had not drunk nor eaten anything, and had done nothing on earth, but sat like one who is gone to the grave.

"I then told Na.nefer.ka.ptah that I wished to see this book, for which we had taken so much trouble. He gave the book into my hands; and when I read a page of the spells in it I also enchanted heaven and earth, the abyss, the mountains, and the sea. I also knew what the birds of the sky, the fishes of the deep, and the beasts of the hills all said. I read another page of the spells, and I saw the sun shining in the sky with all the gods, the full moon, and the stars in their shapes; I saw the fishes of the deep, for a divine power was present that brought them up from the water. As I could not write, I asked Na.nefer.-ka.ptah, who was a good writer, and a very learned one; he called for a new piece of papyrus, and wrote on it all that was in the book before him. He dipped it in beer, and washed it off in the liquid; for he knew that if it were washed off, and he drank it, he would know all that there was in the writing.

"We returned back to Koptos the same day, and made a feast before Isis of Koptos and Harpokrates. We then went to the haven and sailed, and went northward of Koptos. And as we went on Thoth discovered all that Na.nefer.ka.ptah had done with the book! and Thoth hastened to tell Ra, and said, 'Now know that my book and my revelation are with Na.nefer.ka.ptah, son of the King Mer.neb.ptah. He has forced himself into my place, and robbed it, and seized my box with the writings, and

killed my guards who protected it.' And Ra replied to him, 'He is before you, take him and all his kin.' He sent a power from heaven with the command, 'Do not let Na.nefer.ka.ptah return safe to Memphis with all his kin.' And after this hour, the little boy Mer-ab, going out from the awning of the royal boat, fell into the river: he called on Ra, and everybody who was on the bank raised a cry. Na.nefer.ka.ptah went out of the cabin, and read the spell over him; he brought his body up because a divine power brought him to the surface. He read another spell over him, and made him tell of all that happened to him, and of what Thoth had said before Ra.

"We turned back with him to Koptos. We brought him to the Good House, we fetched the people to him, and made one embalm him; and we buried him in his coffin in the cemetery of Koptos like a great and noble person.

"And Na.nefer.ka.ptah, my brother, said: 'Let us go down, let us not delay, for the King has not yet heard of what has happened to him, and his heart will be sad about it.' So we went to the haven, we sailed, and did not stay to the north of Koptos. When we were come to the place where the little boy Mer-ab had fallen into the water, I went out from the awning of the royal boat, and I fell into the river. They called Na.nefer.ka.ptah, and he came out from the cabin of the royal boat; he read a spell over me, and brought my body up, because a divine power brought me to the surface. He drew me out, and read the spell over me, and made me tell him of all that had happened to me, and of what Thoth had said before Ra. Then he turned back with me to Koptos, he brought me to the Good House, he fetched the people to me, and made one embalm me, as great and noble people are buried, and laid me in the tomb where Mer-ab my young child was.

"He turned to the haven, and sailed down, and delayed not in the north of Koptos. When he was come to the place where we fell into the river, he said to his heart: 'Shall I not better turn back again to Koptos that I may lie by them? For, if not, when I go down to Memphis, and the King asks after his children, what shall I say to him? Can I tell him, "I have taken your children to the Thebaid, and killed them, while I remained alive and I have come to Memphis still alive"?' Then he made them bring him a linen cloth of striped byssus; he made a band, and

bound the book firmly, and tied it upon him. Na.nefer.ka.ptah then went out of the awning of the royal boat and fell into the river. He cried on Ra; and all those who were on the bank made an outcry, saying: 'Great woe! Sad woe! Is he lost, that good scribe and able man that has no equal?'

"The royal boat went on, without anyone on earth knowing where Na.nefer.ka.ptah was. It went on to Memphis, and they told all this to the King. Then the King went down to the royal boat in mourning, and all the soldiers and high-priests of Ptah were in mourning, and all the officials and courtiers. And when he saw Na.nefer.ka.ptah, who was in the inner cabin of the royal boat—from his rank of high scribe—he lifted him up. And they saw the book by him; and the King said, 'Let one hide this book that is with him.' And the officers of the king, the priests of Ptah, and the high-priest of Ptah, said to the King, 'Our Lord, may the King live as long as the sun! Na.nefer.ka.ptah was a good scribe, and a very skilful man.' And the King had him laid in his Good House to the sixteenth day, and then had him wrapped to the thirty-fifth day, and laid him out to the seventieth day, and then had him put in his grave in his resting place.

"I have now told you the sorrow which has come upon us because of this book for which you ask, saying, 'Let it be given to me.' You have no claim to it; and, indeed, for the sake of it, we have given up our life on earth."

And Setna said to Ahura, "Give me the book which I see between you and Na.nefer.ka.ptah; for if you do not I will take it by force." Then Na.nefer.ka.ptah rose from his seat and said, "Are you Setna, to whom my wife has told of all these blows of fate, which you have not suffered? Can you take this book by your skill as a good scribe? If, indeed, you can play games with me, let us play a game, then, of 52 points." And Setna said, "I am ready," and the board and its pieces were put before him. And Na.nefer.ka.ptah won a game from Setna; and he put the spell upon him, and defended himself with the game board that was before him, and sunk him into the ground above his feet. He did the same at the second game, and won it from Setna, and sunk him into the ground to his waist. He did the same at the third game, and made him sink into the ground up to his ears. Then Setna struck Na.nefer.ka.ptah a great blow with his

hand. And Setna called his brother An.he.hor.eru and said to him, "Make haste and go upon earth, and tell the King all that has happened to me, and bring me the talisman of my father Ptah, and my magic books."

And he hurried up upon earth, and told the King all that had happened to Setna. The King said, "Bring him the talisman of his father Ptah, and his magic books." And An.he.hor.eru hurried down into the tomb; he laid the talisman on Setna, and he sprang up again immediately. And then Setna reached out his hand for the book, and took it. Then—as Setna went out from the tomb—there went a Light before him, and Darkness behind him. And Ahura wept at him, and she said: "Glory to the King of Darkness! Hail to the King of Light! all power is gone from the tomb." But Na.nefer.ka.ptah said to Ahura: "Do not let your heart be sad; I will make him bring back this book, with a forked stick in his hand, and a fire-pan on his head." And Setna went out from the tomb, and it closed behind him as it was before.

Then Setna went to the King, and told him everything that had happened to him with the book. And the King said to Setna, "Take back the book to the grave of Na.nefer.ka.ptah, like a prudent man, or else he will make you bring it with a forked stick in your hand, and a fire-pan on your head." But Setna would not listen to him; and when Setna had unrolled the book he did nothing on earth but read it to everybody.

After that it happened one day, when Setna was walking near the temple of Ptah, he saw a woman of such beauty that another could not be found to equal her. On her there was much gold, and with her were fifty-two servants. From the time that Setna beheld her, he no longer knew the part of the world he lived in. He called his page, saying, "Do not delay going to the place where that woman is and finding out who she is." The young page made no delay. He addressed the maid-servant who walked behind her, and questioned her, "What person is that?" She said to him, "She is Tbubui, daughter of the prophet of Bastit, who now goes to make her prayer before Ptah." When the young man had returned to Setna, he recounted all the words she had said to him without exception. Setna said to the young man, "Go and say thus to the maid-servant, 'Setna-Khamois, son of the Pharaoh Usimares it is who sends me, saying, 'I will

give thee ten pieces of gold that thou mayest pass an hour with me. If there is necessity to have recourse to violence he will do it, and he will take thee to a hidden place, where no one in the world will find thee.’’ When the young man had returned to the place where Tbubui was, he addressed the maid-servant, and spake with her, but she exclaimed against his words, as though it were an insult to speak them. Tbubui said to the young man, “Cease to speak to that wretched girl; come and speak to me.” The young man approached the place where Tbubui was; he said to her, “I will give thee ten pieces of gold if thou wilt pass an hour with Setna-Khamois, the son of Pharaoh Usimares. If there is necessity to have recourse to violence, he will do so, and will take thee to a hidden place where no one in the world will find thee.” Tbubui said, “Go, say to Setna, ‘I am a hierodule, I am no mean person; if thou dost desire to have thy pleasure of me, thou shalt come to Bubastis into my house. All will be ready there, and thou shalt have thy pleasure of me, and no one in the world shall know it, and I shall not have acted like a woman of the streets.’” When the page had returned to Setna, he repeated to him all the words that she had said without exception, and he said, “Lo, I am satisfied.” But all who were with Setna began to curse.

Setna caused a boat to be fetched, he embarked, and delayed not to arrive at Bubastis. He went to the west of the town, until he came to a house that was very high; it had a wall all round it, it had a garden on the north side, there was a flight of steps in front of it. Setna inquired saying, “Whose is this house?” They said to him, “It is the house of Tbubui.” Setna entered the grounds, and he marveled at the pavilion situated in the garden while they told Tbubui; she came down, she took the hand of Setna, and she said to him, “By my life! the journey to the house of the priest of Bastit, lady of Ankhutauui, at which thou art arrived, is very pleasant to me. Come up with me.” Setna went up by the stairway of the house with Tbubui. He found the upper story of the house sanded and powdered with sand and powder of real lapis lazuli and real turquoise. There were several beds there, spread with stuffs of royal linen, and also many cups of gold on a stand. They filled a golden cup with wine and placed it in the hand of Setna and Tbubui said to him, “Will it please thee to rest thyself?” He said to her,

"That is not what I wish to do." They put scented wood on the fire, they brought perfumes of the kind that are supplied to Pharaoh, and Setna made a happy day with Tbubui. "Let us accomplish that for which we have come here." She said to him, "Thou shalt arrive at thy house, that where thou art. But for me, I am a hierodule, I am no mean person. If thou desirest to have thy pleasure of me, thou shalt make me a contract of sustenance, and a contract of money on all the things and all the goods that are thine." He said to her, "Let the scribe of the school be brought." He was brought immediately, and Setna caused to be made in favor of Tbubui a contract for maintenance, and he made her in writing a dowry of all the things, all the goods that were his. An hour passed, one came to say this to Setna, "Thy children are below." He said, "Let them be brought up." Tbubui arose; she put on a robe of fine linen and Setna beheld all her limbs through it, and his desire increased yet more than before. Setna said to Tbubui, "Let us accomplish now that for which I came." She said to him, "Thou shalt arrive at my house, that where thou art. But for me, I am a hierodule; I am no mean person. If thou desirest to have thy pleasure of me, thou wilt cause thy children to subscribe to my writing that they may not seek a quarrel with my children on the subject of thy possessions." Setna had his children fetched and made them subscribe to the writing. Setna said to Tbubui, "Let me now accomplish that for which I came." She said to him, "Thou shalt arrive at thy house, that where thou art. But for me, I am a hierodule; I am no mean person. If thou dost desire to have thy pleasure of me, thou shalt cause thy children to be slain, so that they may not seek a quarrel with my children on account of thy possessions." Setna said, "Let the crime be committed on them of which the desire has entered thy heart." She caused the children of Setna to be slain before him, she had them thrown out below the window, to the dogs and cats, and they ate their flesh, and he heard them while he was drinking with Tbubui. Setna said to Tbubui, "Let us accomplish that for which we have come here, for all that thou hast said before me has been done for thee." She said to him, "Come into this chamber." Setna entered the chamber; he lay down on a bed of ivory and ebony, in order that his love might be rewarded, and Tbubui lay down by the side of Setna. He stretched out his hand to touch her;

she opened her mouth widely and uttered a loud cry.

When Setna came to himself he was in a place of a furnace without any clothing on his back. After an hour Setna perceived a very big man standing on a platform, with quite a number of attendants beneath his feet, for he had the semblance of a Pharaoh. Setna was about to raise himself but he could not arise for shame, for he had no clothing on his back. This Pharaoh said, "Setna, what is the state in which you are?" He said, "It is Na.nefer.ka.ptah who has had all this done to me." This Pharaoh said, "Go to Memphis; thy children, lo! they wish for thee. Lo! they are standing before Pharaoh." Setna spake before this Pharaoh, "My great lord the king—mayest thou have the duration of Ra—how can I arrive at Memphis, for I have no raiment in the world on my back?" This Pharaoh called a page who was standing near him and commanded him to give a garment to Setna. This Pharaoh said, "Setna, go to Memphis. Thy children, behold they live, behold they are standing before the King."

So Setna went to Memphis, and embraced his children for that they were alive. And the King said to him, "Were you not drunk to do so?" Then Setna told all the things that had happened with Tбubui and Na.nefer.ka.ptah. And the King said, "Setna, I have already lifted up my hand against you before, and said, 'He will kill you if you do not take back the book to the place you took it from.' But you have never listened to me till this hour. Now, then, take the book to Na.nefer.ka.ptah, with a forked stick in your hand, and a fire-pan on your head."

So Setna went out from before the King, with a forked stick in his hand, and a fire-pan on his head. He went down to the tomb in which was Na.nefer.ka.ptah. And Ahura said to him, "It is Ptah, the great god, that has brought you back safe." Na.nefer.ka.ptah laughed, and he said, "This is the business that I told you before." And when Setna had praised Na.nefer.-ka.ptah, he found it as the proverb says, "The sun was in the whole tomb." And Ahura and Na.nefer.ka.ptah besought Setna greatly. And Setna said, "Na.nefer.ka.ptah, is it aught disgraceful (that you lay on me to do)?" And Na.nefer.ka.ptah said, "Setna, you know this, that Ahura and Mer-ab, her child, behold! they are in Koptos; bring them here into this tomb, by the skill of a good scribe. Let it be impressed upon you to

take pains, and to go to Koptos to bring them here." Setna then went out from the tomb to the King, and told the King all that Na.nefer.ka.ptah had told him.

The King said, "Setna, go to Koptos and bring back Ahura and Mer-ab." He answered the King, "Let one give me the royal boat and its belongings." And they gave him the royal boat and its belongings, and he left the haven, and sailed without stopping till he came to Koptos.

And they made this known to the priests of Isis at Koptos and to the high-priest of Isis; and behold they came down to him, and gave him their hand to the shore. He went up with them and entered into the temple of Isis of Koptos and of Harpokrates. He ordered one to offer for him an ox, a goose, and some wine, and he made a burnt-offering and a drink-offering before Isis of Koptos and Harpokrates. He went to the cemetery of Koptos with the priests of Isis and the high-priest of Isis. They dug about for three days and three nights, for they searched even in all the catacombs which were in the cemetery of Koptos; they turned over the steles of the scribes of the "double house of life," and read the inscriptions that they found on them. But they could not find the resting-place of Ahura and Mer-ab.

Now Na.nefer.ka.ptah perceived that they could not find the resting-place of Ahura and her child Mer-ab. So he raised himself up as a venerable, very old ancient, and came before Setna. And Setna saw him, and Setna said to the ancient: "You look like a very old man; do you know where is the resting-place of Ahura and her child Mer-ab?" The ancient said to Setna: "It was told by the father of the father of my father to the father of my father, and the father of my father has told it to my father; the resting-place of Ahura and of her child Mer-ab is in a mound south of the town of Pehemato." And Setna said to the ancient, "Perhaps we may do damage to Pehemato, and you are ready to lead one to the town for the sake of that." The ancient replied to Setna: "If one listens to me, shall he therefore destroy the town of Pehemato! If they do not find Ahura and her child Mer-ab under the south corner of their town may I be disgraced." They attended to the ancient, and found the resting-place of Ahura and her child Mer-ab under the south corner of the town of Pehemato. Setna laid them in the royal boat to bring them as honored persons, and restored the

town of Pehemato as it originally was. And Na.nefer.ka.ptah made Setna to know that it was he who had come to Koptos, to enable them to find out where the resting-place was of Ahura and her child Mer-ab.

So Setna left the haven in the royal boat, and sailed without stopping, and reached Memphis with all the soldiers who were with him. And when they told the King he came down to the royal boat. He took them as honored persons escorted to the catacombs, in which Na.nefer.ka.ptah was, and smoothed down the ground over them.

This is the completed writing of the tale of Setna Kha.em.uast, and Na.nefer.ka.ptah, and his wife Ahura, and their child Mer-ab. It was written in the thirty-fifth year, the month of Tybi.

